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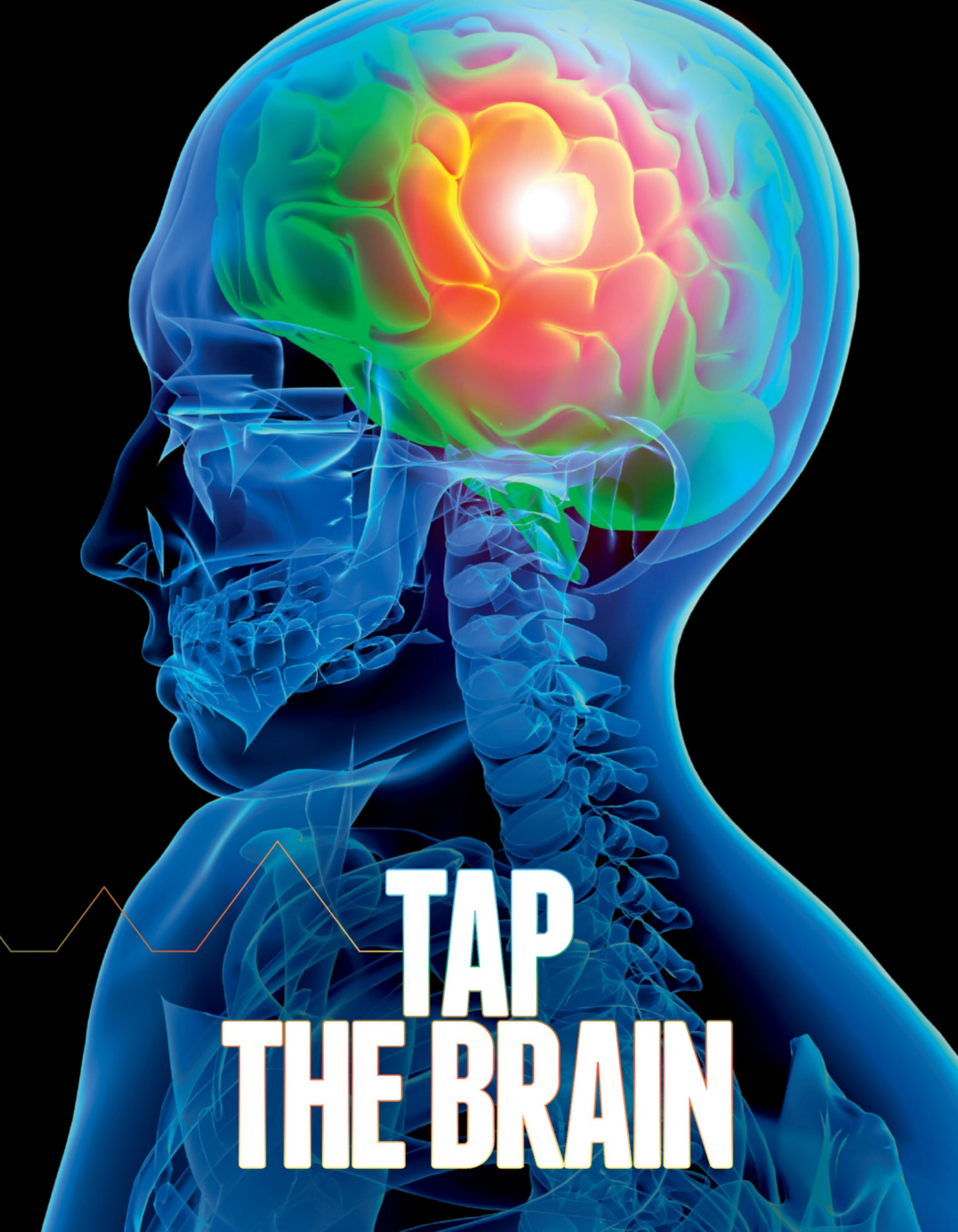
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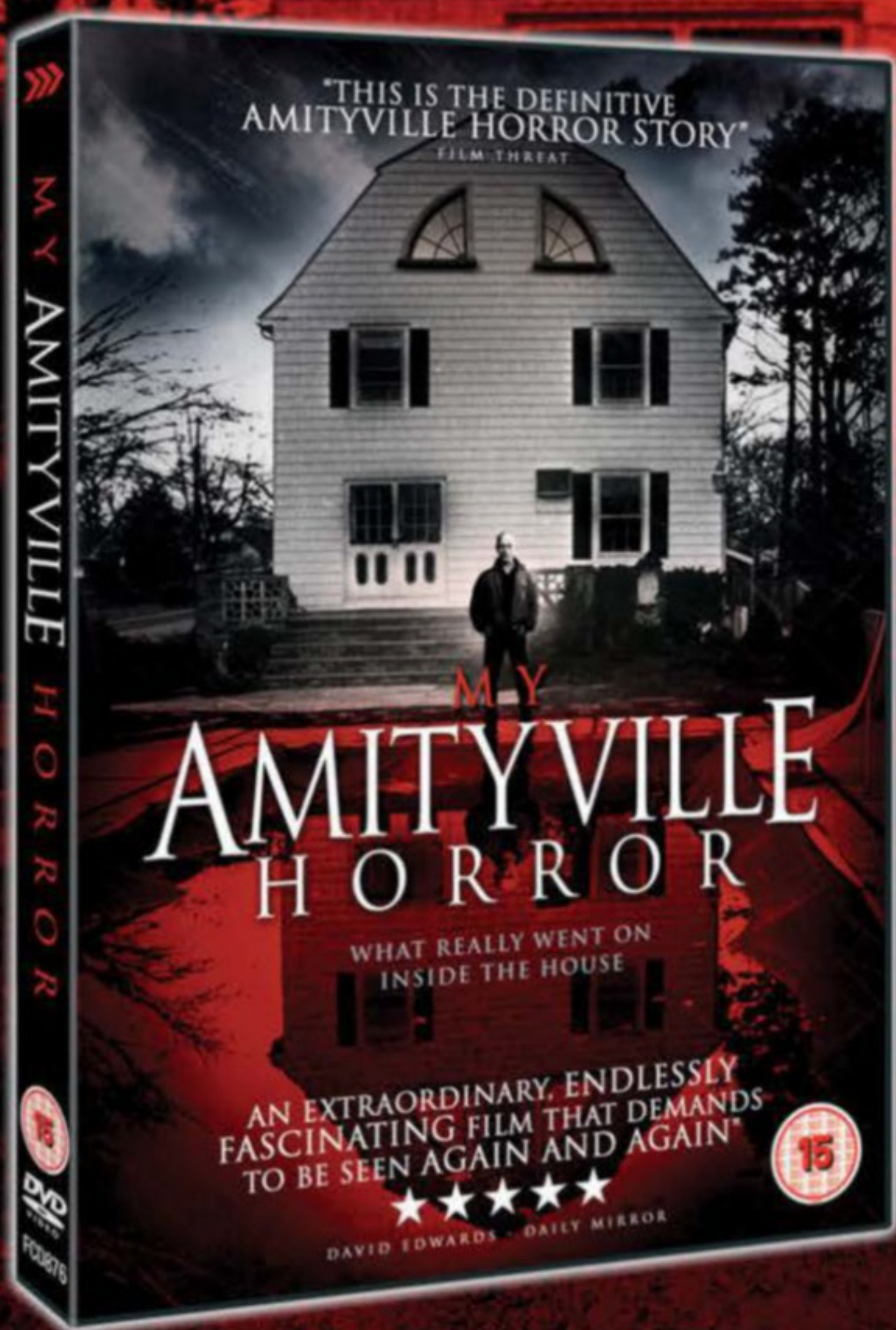
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**TAP
THE BRAIN**

MY AMITYVILLE HORROR

WHAT REALLY WENT ON INSIDE THE HOUSE



DAVID EDWARDS
DAILY MIRROR



"THIS IS THE
DEFINITIVE AMITYVILLE
HORROR STORY"
FILM THREAT

"FASCINATING"
JOBLO

"RIVETING"
INDIEWIRE

ON DVD OCT 28TH

ARROW  FILMS

GET EXCITED ABOUT SLEEPY HOLLOW

Leaping into *Grimm*'s supernatural drama wake, Fox's *Sleepy Hollow* comes from the Kurtzman/Orci wonder team and has that same chewable weekly mystery format as *Fringe*. Armed with some idiosyncratically American gothic horror touches that have been massaged into a full-blown arc mythology, that blockbuster touch should save it from the cruel fate of the duo's other flashlight-panning cop show, *Alcatraz*.

James
James Hoare
Editor



I can't remember a time before I was a *Doctor Who* fan. I was lucky enough to be a part of that last generation before it left the air – my most vivid memory is of the Dalek's murderous POV as it ascended the stairs, bearing down on a terrified Sylvester McCoy in 'Remembrance Of The Daleks'.

Lucky, not because I have 'real' memories of classic *Who* with which to lord it over new fans, but because my relationship with the show matured alongside a fandom that seemed to be at its most passionate and creative. Without the constraints of TV continuity, fiction flourished, fan films were born and audio adventures would follow. Inspired by a fanzine one of my cousins made (*Hand Of Omega*, if anyone remembers it), I put together my own.

Half of it was content photocopied from his, some from the *Doctor Who Magazine*, and then some rambling nonsense of my own – the cover art was Chris Achilleos' wonderfully haunting cover for the Target novelisation of *Doctor Who And The Dalek Invasion Of Earth*. That's rather a lot of copyright infringement I've just owned up to, so be gentle. I only sold two copies in my primary school playground before the teacher on duty confiscated them, along with the 30p profit.

There's a lovely sense of coming full circle. Aside from the pomp and glory of the 50th anniversary getting the fanfare it deserves – the terrible events of the 30th still burn a hole in my heart – there's that all-important human element.

My relationship with *Doctor Who* won't be that dissimilar to yours, or the stories of the people at the heart of the show. Time has been a great democratiser. As fans came of age they kept *Doctor Who* alive, and eventually returned it to our screens. They became writers (Mark Gatiss, Paul Cornell, Gareth Roberts), showrunners (Steven Moffat, Russell T Davies) and even Doctors (David Tennant, Peter Capaldi).

This 50th anniversary belongs to all of us. We all came to this series and put something of ourselves into it – our love, creativity, passion and time. We're not celebrating 50 years of *Doctor Who*; we're celebrating 50 years of *our Doctor Who*.

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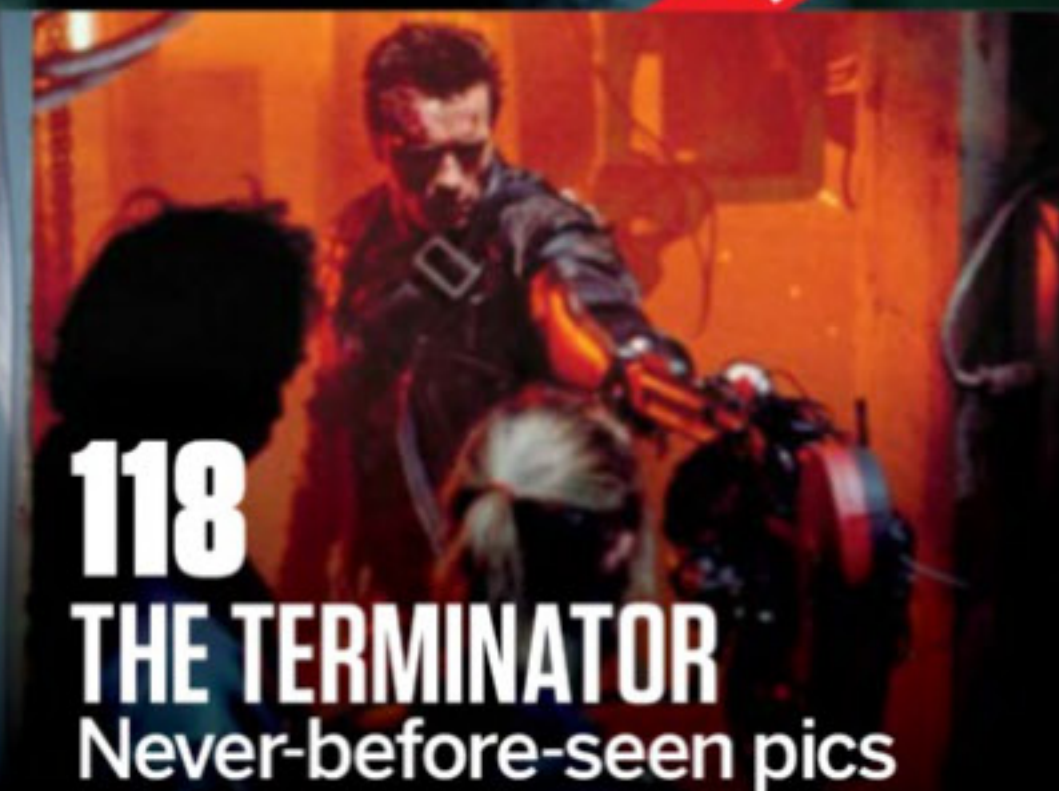
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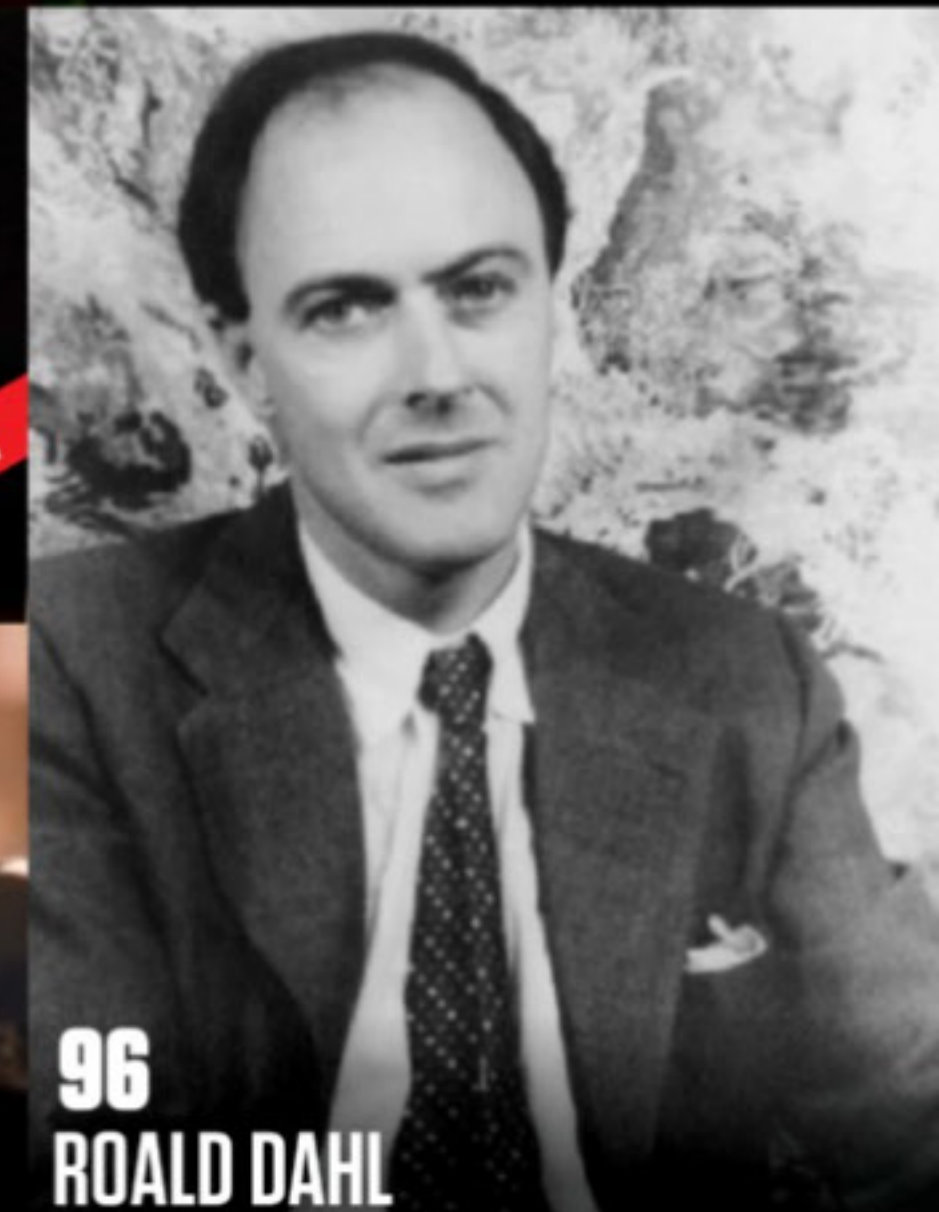
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MEET THE TEAM

Q. Who was the Doctor that best defined the show for you?



James Hoare Editor

A. **Sylvester McCoy**
My memories are of McCoy, the enigmatic arch-manipulator.



Jodie Tyley Deputy Editor

A. **David Tennant**
The greatest hits of new *Who*: best episodes, companions and the Adipose!



Jonathan Hatfull Staff Writer

A. **Paul McGann**
I taped the movie and watched it again the next morning.



Steve Wright Sub Editor

A. **Christopher Eccleston**
Eccleston was my gateway into *Who* – and what a gateway he was.

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PORTAL

Your essential, trustworthy and unrivalled guide to the latest genre happenings

NEWS

ROBOCOP ON TRIAL

Samuel L Jackson, José Padilha and Joel Kinnaman defend the remake

WORDS
JODIE TYLEY
INTERVIEWS
STEVE NASH

Comments on the *RoboCop* trailer on YouTube range from hopeful to downright scornful. And then there's the odd reference to *Knight Rider's* KITT. It's no surprise that reaction has been mixed, especially since the remake of *Total Recall* floundered at the box office. Director José Padilha denies that this is a straight do-over, though. "It's a film you can't just do again," he admits. "So we didn't decide to redo *RoboCop*. We took the concept of *RoboCop* and brought it to the present."

The main difference in this film is that Officer Alex Murphy isn't killed. Instead, he's injured in a car bomb explosion, and multinational conglomerate OmniCorp seizes the opportunity to develop a part-man, part-robot cop. "The movie uses the current issue of drones and takes them to their increasingly robotic evolution," says Padilha. "The first film saw the future uses, which is of great merit. Now we have more knowledge of how it's going to go down. First we use them abroad, then we are going to use them at home."

OmniCorp imagines a *RoboCop* in every city, but they don't count on Alex Murphy's battle to override the command system. This seems to be the main focus of the movie, as Murphy struggles with being a husband and father as well as a law enforcer made of steel. Star Joel Kinnaman admits he had second thoughts about taking on the role: "We all loved – and respected – the original, so I was a little intimidated to do this. But excited. There is a wrong way to do a *RoboCop* remake,

but this isn't it. When I heard José Padilha was doing it, I had no doubts."

The director's previous work on the *Elite Squad* films shows he's capable of striking a balance between the message and action, but *RoboCop* won't be as violent. The filmmaker is aiming for a PG-13 rating and a mainstream audience, which is another reason why the project has come under fire. But Padilha's not budging: "I never really bought into this idea that *RoboCop* has to be R-rated because the first *RoboCop* was amazingly violent. *The Dark Knight* is PG-13, so you can get away with a lot these days with that certificate."

Aside from the relatively unknown Kinnaman, there are some big names bolstering the project. There's Gary Oldman as *RoboCop*'s maker, Michael Keaton starring as the villainous CEO of OmniCorp, and Marvel movie mascot Samuel L Jackson as media mogul Pat Novak. Keaton calls the movie "hugely entertaining", while Jackson says it appeals to his inner geek: "I was excited about a modern-day *RoboCop*, thinking about the possibilities and the advancements in robotics," he says.

"I read a lot of comic-books, so I see a lot of things, and I was very excited by that possibility and knowing that there are a lot of young people who may be aware of *RoboCop*, but not really the way we're aware of *RoboCop* and what it all meant when we saw it. I'm excited for them to come into that world."

RoboCop will be released in cinemas on 7 February 2014.



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Comic creator Robert Kirkman on the zombie spin-off

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“
**THERE IS A
WRONG WAY TO
DO A ROBOCOP
REMAKE, BUT
THIS ISN'T IT**
JOEL KINNAMAN”

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OFF THE MARKY MARK

COMPLETE AND UTTER BAYHEM

Your first look at the human heroes of *Transformers: Age Of Extinction* WORDS JODIE TYLEY

What's the one phrase that sums up Michael Bay's fourth robo 'buster? It's "Chase from Hell," the director told *Coming Soon.net*, and while he is remaining tight-lipped regarding the details for *Transformers: Age Of Extinction*, the first behind-the-scenes picture reveals all the hallmarks of a multi-million dollar Bay movie: explosions and destruction at sunset. We've also got our first look at the all-new cast led by Mark Wahlberg, Nicola Peltz and Stanley Tucci.



The enemy they'll be facing is yet to be seen, but producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura has let slip that it will be the Dinobots – robots that transform into dinosaurs – which makes sense, given the movie's title. "The world's coolest, most exciting cars will appear in the film," he added in an interview with *Beijing News*, "including Chinese vehicles, so whether you are a car enthusiast or not, it will be a feast for the eyes."

The *Transformers* saga has so far proved to be a solid box office performer, with *Dark Of The Moon* making more than \$1 billion and becoming the sixth highest-grossing movie of all time. This latest instalment picks up four years after the third film, when a group of powerful businessmen and scientists are pushing the boundaries of technology, while an ancient Transformer menace returns to Earth.

Transformers: Age Of Extinction is due in cinemas 10 July 2014.



Mark Wahlberg heads the all-new cast for *Transformers: Age Of Extinction*.



MASTER OF PUPPETS

GERRY ANDERSON'S FINAL PROJECT IS GO!

Jamie Anderson talks new book series *Gemini Force One* INTERVIEW JAMES HOARE



Legendary *Thunderbirds* creator Gerry Anderson passed away on Boxing Day 2012, but his ideas live on in *Gemini Force One*, a book trilogy to be completed by YA author MG Harris from Anderson's own notes and outlines. Rather than take it to a publisher, Jamie Anderson – Gerry's son – opted to take it to Kickstarter and

release it as an eBook. We spoke to him to find out why...

5 IT'S FAITHFUL

"One of the things that seemed to be the downfall of any Anderson property was when other people got involved and steered it away from the original concept. This is still his idea, this isn't my baby – I'm just nurturing it because he already got it going."

4 IT'S IN SAFE HANDS

"[MG Harris] and I just clicked. She hadn't taken it down the route of making it into her style or her project; she just got how to keep it Gerry Anderson and fill in the gaps and turn Anderson ideas and action into decent prose."

3 IT'S RELEVANT

"This was initially sparked off by the Deepwater Horizon oil platform incident. *Gemini Force* was really a result of him watching the news and becoming immersed in a world where environmental stuff is more dominant, and also terrorism has become a greater and greater threat. It's a rescue force born out of the need of a society to deal with those problems."

2 IT'S A THUNDERBIRDS PREQUEL (SORT OF)

"It's set in a different world, so we're not in 2065. I guess it's a pre-*Thunderbirds* world; we're looking at five to ten years in the future from now. Although the show is from the early Sixties

and is set 100 years in the future, the rate of change of technology is accelerating so rapidly that *UFO* is only set 11 years in the future."

1 IT'S HEADING TO TV (MAYBE)

"The Kickstarter campaign itself has caught the eyes of a couple of people who may be able to facilitate the move toward a TV series, that's all I can say at this stage. It's such early days, but to have a call from somebody that I know can make this book a much bigger thing after 72 hours of the campaign running is a pretty good sign."

Find out more at www.gerryanderson.co.uk.



“JOSS WROTE AMY’S
AUDITION SCENE IN
IAMBIC PENTAMETER
ALEXIS DENISOF”

FIVE THINGS WITH ALEXIS DENISOF AND AMY ACKER

Angel’s best-loved couple on reuniting with Joss Whedon WORDS JODIE TYLEY

1 Ten-year reunion

Following *Avengers Assemble*, director Joss Whedon jumped straight into making another movie: an adaptation of William Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing*, starring his *Angel* chums Alexis Denisof and Amy Acker. Despite a decade having passed, Denisof says it was just like filming *Angel*. “There’s not much time to make a TV show where there’s an eight-day turnaround, and for this we only had 12. We fall into rhythm so easily, and the three of us have a trust and rapport; we’re always trying to make the other two laugh.”

2 Happy endings

The last time we saw them together it was as doomed lovers Fred and Wesley, so *Much Ado* was a chance to see the pair get a happy ending (in a sense). “You know Joss,” says Denisof. “He either kills you or breaks you up.” “We got both!” laughs Acker. “The three of us have a special collaboration, and even on the *Angel*

series finale [‘Not Fade Away’] Joss came to direct us. He didn’t write the episode, but he wrote that one scene where Wesley dies, and directed it for the day.”

3 Double act

Much Ado is packed with razor-sharp wit and physical comedy, which Denisof particularly enjoyed. His favourite moments on *Angel* were the comedy episodes: “I remember when we came to ‘Spin The Bottle’ [S4E06]. Joss wrote that just because he missed the old goofy days of early Fred and Wesley, because he intentionally wanted to have a moment of sheer silliness before plunging down again. In that sense it’s very reminiscent of Shakespeare.”

4 Behind closed doors

The Shakespeare readings at Whedon’s house have become legendary, and this film brings us as close as possible to an invite. “Hanging out at Joss’ house has that sense of watching *Much Ado*, you have an energy and a smile,” says Acker. “If he asks you to do something, like go

to dinner or be on a TV show, the answer should always be yes, because it’s always going to be a good time with good people.” So what does it take to infiltrate the inner circle? “Try to bathe,” she deadpans.

5 Shanshu Prophecy

Trivia: the first time this duo met, it was in the context of a Shakespeare-inspired scene. “Joss wrote Amy’s audition scene in iambic pentameter because he can. I think there were even rhyming couplets,” says Denisof. “The scene was J August Richards and myself fighting for the affections of this new character Fred, and that became a theme in the series, but it also came full circle with the Shakespeare connection on this movie.”



Incidentally, Illyria – the blue demon Fred transforms into – was named after the setting of *Twelfth Night*.

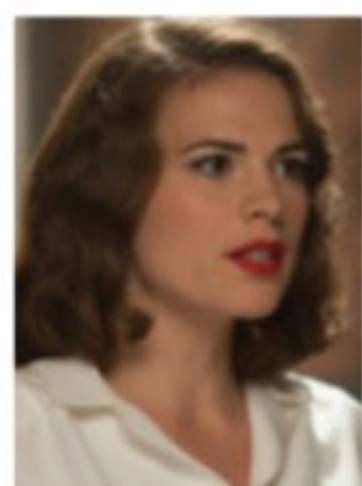
Much Ado About Nothing is available on DVD and Blu-ray now.



SHIELD MEETS MAD MEN

Hayley Atwell wants to star in an Agent Carter TV spin-off

WORDS JODIE TYLEY INTERVIEW STEVE NASH



Definitely one of the stand-out supporting characters of Marvel Phase One, and largely the series' only non-exploitative fantasy ass-kicker (Black Widow) or vanilla

love interest (Jane Foster, Pepper Potts), *Captain America: The First Avenger's* Agent Peggy Carter could be getting a TV series on ABC.

Played by Hayley Atwell in the movie and the Marvel One-Shot that came included with the *Iron Man 3* Blu-ray, Margaret 'Peggy' Carter was a British officer with the OSS/SOE-like SSR – the Strategic Scientific Reserve – which after the war became known as SHIELD. "It's obviously set in a time where the difference between men and women in the workplace was a lot stronger than it is now, but there is still a long way to go," explains Atwell.

"I always love seeing strong role models for women, both for me growing up and even me now. I think it's very

important. So it's an honour to be part of that world."

The question is whether she would be willing to return. While Marvel and ABC remain tight-lipped, she told us, "If the scripts were good, I would do it. Anything's possible. She's awesome." The actress certainly enjoyed playing a more active role in the *Agent Carter* short. "I got to kick a lot of butt in this, which I didn't get to do in *Captain America*," she says. "I kept doing that embarrassing thing where you create your own sound effects. I kept going 'Pow!' to myself, and the sound lady was like, 'You really don't need to do that.'"

Agents Of SHIELD also started life as a Marvel One-Shot – *Item 47* – and given the role SHIELD or its predecessor play in the proposed show, it would be a missed opportunity not to use it as a prequel, setting up characters and concepts that could be revisited in later Marvel movies or TV shows.

Agents Of SHIELD is currently airing on Channel 4.

FUN WITH JANE

FEMALE SUPERHERO MOVIE CONFIRMED

Thor's Natalie Portman adds fuel to the Captain Marvel rumours



Let's face it, Marvel movies are a bit of a boys' club. But that's about to change, according to Natalie Portman.

Speaking exclusively to SciFiNow, she confirmed that a female-led superhero film is on the agenda.

"There are many strong women, but it will be exciting when there is a central female character, which I think is coming – I have heard is coming – and, of course, also a central non-white character," she says. "I think it's a testament to the people who run Marvel, their respect and the way they want to characterise them; you can tell when men talk to you, as just a person or as a 'woman'."

This echoes the rumours of a Captain Marvel movie that Marvel Co-President Louis D'Esposito mentioned to *ComingSoon.net*. One of Marvel's mightiest superheroes, she led the Avengers as Ms Marvel before adopting the name Captain Marvel. There has even been casting talk, as *Battlestar Galactica's* Katee Sackhoff hinted at meetings with Marvel on the *Schmoes Know* podcast: "There's been a lot of checking of availability..." she revealed, "[and] a lot of questions about the first quarter of next year."

This coincides with the filming of *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*, but as Captain Marvel is one of Marvel's heavy hitters, it would make sense for her to cameo in Phase Two.

Thor: The Dark World is in cinemas 30 October 2013.



GIRL POWER

The super characters we think deserve their own movie

Batwoman (DC)

Long gone is the original Batwoman who, along with Batgirl, was created just to serve as Batman's love interest. The modern Kate Kane wouldn't look at Bruce Wayne twice, and not just because of her headline-grabbing sexuality. This Batwoman doesn't take anyone's lead, so it's only fitting she should set the trend rather than follow it.

Stargirl (DC)

Stars' creation is tinted by sadness, as Geoff Johns based her personality on his late sister, also named Courtney. In the comics, she discovers the original Star-Spangled Kid's outfit while rooting through her stepfather's things and wears it out of spite. The story turns rather sweet when he builds a robotic suit called STRIPE, which he wears to protect her.

Miss America (Marvel)

The original heroine was a shining example of comics tradition as a heiress who had an accident in a science lab. We think her successor America Chavez would suit a movie better, however, as a sassy Latino superheroine who's recruited to join the Young Avengers. No one knows much about her, but it's rumoured that she can kick a person off the planet.

AVENGERS DISASSEMBLED

FIRST LOOK
AT ULTRONRUMOUR
WARNINGA blow-by-blow analysis of the
Avengers: Age Of Ultron teaser

1 This teaser shows the Iron Man armour slowly transforming into Ultron, implying a direct link between them. The footage was also released via the JARVIS app, which makes us wonder whether Ultron is the next stage in Tony Stark's artificially intelligent computer. There are no coincidences in the Marvel universe, and writer/director Joss Whedon is the king of the organic arc, so we can rest assured that he's not going to conjure up a plot point and pretend it always existed. We're already well aware that some SHIELD agents have more intel than others, so perhaps these secrets are going to come to the fore in the *Avengers* sequel, and Ultron could be an intrinsic part of that.

2 "I don't play well with others," Tony Stark's words echo from *Avengers Assemble*. At the time he was quoting SHIELD's reason for originally deeming him unfit for the superpowered team-up. There's got to be a reason for using this dialogue to remind us of SHIELD's initial distrust of Iron Man. What if Ultron is actually something SHIELD has created (using Stark's research and tech) to pre-emptively destroy the Avengers should they turn rogue and jeopardise world? Comics have executed a similar idea in the past with Brother Eye, the advanced surveillance system developed by Batman and used to spy on the Justice League.

3 "You here with a mission, sir? Trying to get me back in the world?" says Captain America. His solo sequel, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, will continue his search for a place in modern society and develop his relationship with SHIELD. In *Avengers Assemble* he was willing to trust the organisation, but we can imagine he's in for a rude awakening. Perhaps this will come from the realisation that Agent Coulson's death was a lie, used to manipulate them into working as a team. After all, Nick Fury used blood-splattered Captain America cards to convince them, making things personal. We wouldn't be surprised if Whedon delivers on the tension felt between Iron Man and Cap in the first film.

4 Next up, we hear from Thor, who growls: "After all this time, why return now?" It's the only new line of dialogue, and leaves us wondering whether it's from *Thor: The Dark World*. On screen, the Iron Man suit starts to spark and splinter, revealing chinks in the armour as Dr Bruce Banner observes, "We're not a team, we're a time bomb." It hammers home the idea of conflict within the line-up, which *Iron Man 3* writer Drew Pearce hinted at earlier this year: "I suspect that the first port of call in that movie will be kicking the shit out of those characters to see how they cope as a group."

5 "They'll come back. Because we'll need them to," concludes Fury, as we get our first look at the reason for the Avengers to reassemble: the face of Ultron. In the comics, Ultron's powers are equal to the Avengers, making him particularly tricky to dispose of. Will this turn out to be Adam and the Initiative versus the Scooby Gang in *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* all over again? Either way, we suspect the only way to defeat this evil robot will be to pull together.

Avengers: Age Of Ultron will be released in summer 2015.



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Coruscant Underworld
Concept art for the proposed video game *Star Wars: 1313* by Ryan Church.

EXPANDED UNIVERSE

STAR WARS UNSEEN

A sneak peek at the *Star Wars* videogames and live-action series you could have had WORDS JODIE TYLEY

When Ahsoka Tano fled to level 1312 of Coruscant in *The Clone Wars* Season Five, we were given our first real look at what *Star Wars: 1313* could have been like. The videogame was going to focus on the criminal underworld of the Republic capital, perhaps accompanied by the long-mooted live-action television series, provisionally titled *Star Wars: Underworld* and pitched as 'Deadwood in space'. These plans, along with a multiplayer online game called *Star Wars: First Assault*, were canned when LucasArts closed earlier this year,

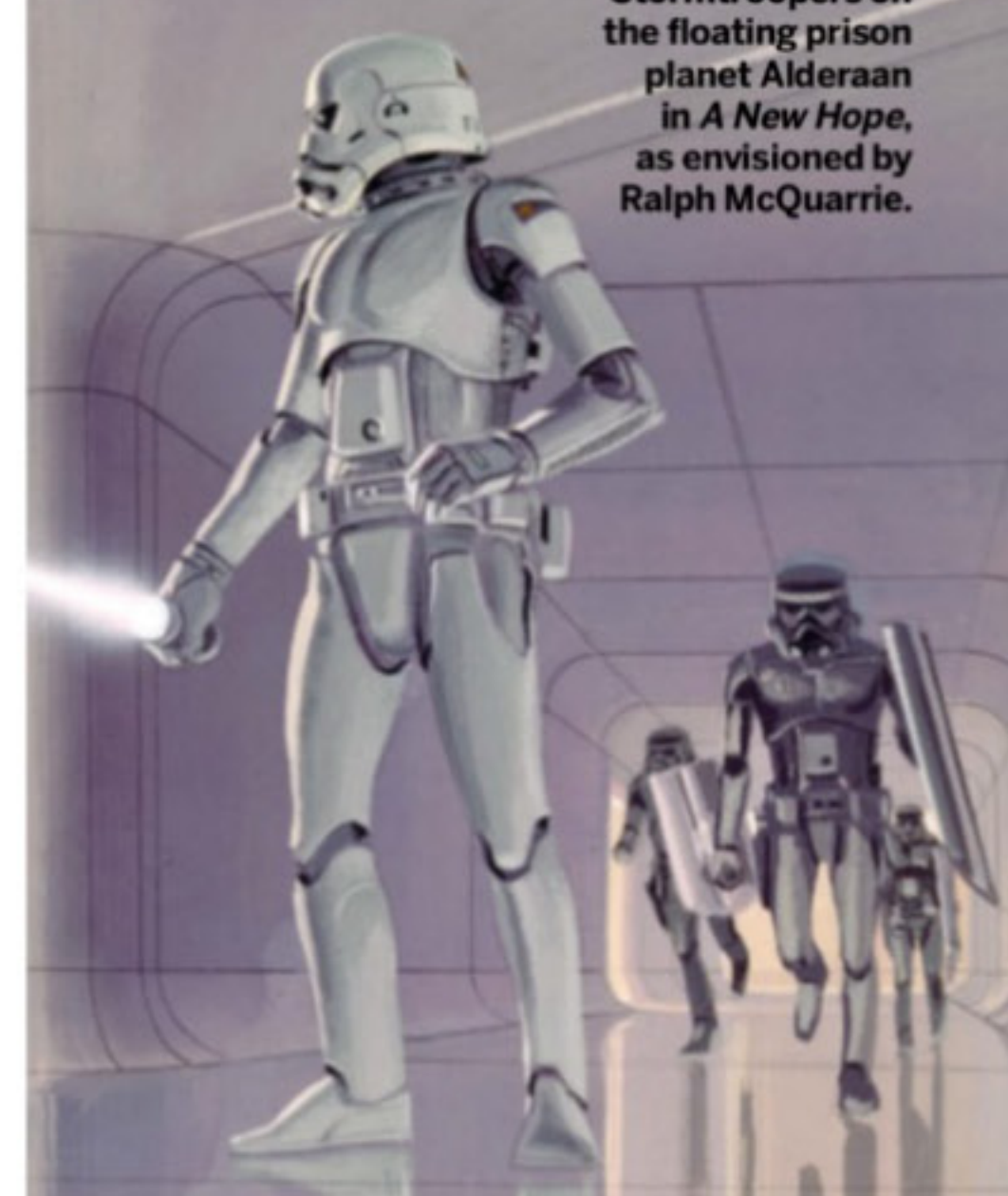
putting a stop to what seemed to be a larger plan to bring *Star Wars* back to an older audience. *Star Wars Art: Concept* gives us the chance to see what the next generation of TV and videogame projects could have been like, brought to life by respected artists including Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston. Here's an exclusive glimpse of the world we didn't get to see...



Star Wars Art: Concept is available now for £25, published by Abrams.

Padmé's Wedding
Iain McCaig's concept art for Padmé Amidala's dress for her wedding with Anakin Skywalker in *Attack Of The Clones*.

Armed Stormtroopers
Stormtroopers on the floating prison planet Alderaan in *A New Hope*, as envisioned by Ralph McQuarrie.



Rebel Troopers
The cancelled online game, *Star Wars: First Assault*, could have featured tense action scenes such as this, depicted by Richard Lim.

THE DEAD RISE AGAIN

THE WALKING DEAD SPIN-OFF IS COMING

AMC orders a companion series with a bunch of new characters for 2015

WORDS JODIE TYLEY

The world of *The Walking Dead* is getting bigger, as AMC is developing a companion series. It's the brainchild of *The Walking Dead* comics creator Robert Kirkman and executive producers Gale Anne Hurd and David Alpert, and will feature a new cast to care about.

"Building on the success of the most popular show on television for adults 18-49 is literally a no-brainer," AMC president and GM Charlie Collier said. "We look forward to working with Robert, Gale and Dave again as we develop an entirely new story and cast of characters. It's a big world, and we can't wait to give fans another unforgettable view of the zombie apocalypse."

Kirkman added that even after a decade of writing the comic-book series, he's eager to start work. "After ten years of writing the comic-book series and being so close to the debut of our fourth, and in my opinion, best season of the TV series, I couldn't be more thrilled about getting the chance to create a new corner of *The Walking Dead* universe," he said. "The opportunity to make a show that isn't tethered by the events of the comic-book, and is truly a blank page, has set my creativity racing."

The Walking Dead Season Four is currently airing on FOX.



The *Walking Dead* could be in line to receive its own spin-off.



50 GREATEST SCI-FI ICONS

The complete guide to the legends of sci-fi has arrived

From James T Kirk to Robby the Robot, *The 50 Greatest Sci-Fi Icons* bookazine gives an in-depth look at some of the most influential characters, men and machines who have shaped the sci-fi genre. See if your favourite has made the list, and read about how some of film and TV's most iconic characters were born.

With over 200 pages packed with features and interviews, we speak to the likes of Stan Lee and Joss Whedon to get a first-hand insight into the making of your most cherished heroes. Whether you're a fan of *Batman*, *Godzilla*, *Doctor Who*, *ET* or *Mal Reynolds*, there's something here for every sci-fi fan.

The 50 Greatest Sci-Fi Icons is on sale now for £9.99, available from the Imagine Shop at www.imagineshop.co.uk.

DRACULA BEGINS

NEW BLOOD

WORDS JODIE TYLEY

Jonathan Rhys Meyers on becoming the world's most famous vampire, Dracula

How does this reimagined version of Dracula differ from the original?

We took the blueprints that Bram Stoker laid down, set the story at the same time – in Victorian England – but changed some of the characters and the nature of their position. In this series, Dracula wants revenge against the Ordo Draco, a secret society that did him wrong hundreds of years ago. His anger and fury have been building up ever since.

What is the look, feel and tone like?

It's lush and beautiful. It uses rich colours and lenses that [cinematographer] Chris Seager has developed that could almost be described as [like a] Victorian

graphic novel. At the same time it has the beauty and majesty of *Downton Abbey* or *Boardwalk Empire*.

What is Dracula?

He's the manifestation of pain and loss. He represents what happens when you break somebody to that extent, when you completely demolish their spirit and take away the things that they love. Not only taking away his wife and kingdom, but his power, his life and not allowing him the peace of death. It's torture on an epic level, which is why he waits so long for revenge. It's a dish best served cold.

Dracula is airing soon on Sky Living.





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TAKING A DIFFERENT ROUTE

BRAVE NEW WORLD

WORDS JODIE TYLEY INTERVIEW STEVE NASH

Divergent star Shailene Woodley and director Neil Burger on why it's dangerous to be different

Don't try and define me" is the message from the next young adult smash-hit-in-waiting, *Divergent*. It's set in a dystopian Chicago, where society is split into five factions, each dedicated to a particular virtue.

Once a teenager turns 16 they must choose take an aptitude test (the equivalent of popping on the Sorting Hat) and devote the rest of their lives to the faction they're most suited to. "They seem to be living in peace and harmony because of it," explains director Neil Burger (*Limitless*), "but then it all starts to fall apart."

At the heart of this story is Beatrice 'Tris' Prior, played by Shailene Woodley, who makes the difficult decision to leave her family's faction (Abnegation, the selfless) and be who she wants to be by joining Dauntless – the brave group. In fact, she displays a talent for not one

but three factions, leading to her being branded 'Divergent', but if anyone knew that then her life would be on the line.

"What I liked about *Divergent* were the human elements of this young woman's journey," adds Burger. "Yes, it's based on a young adult novel, but I felt like it's a universal story about, 'Where do I belong? Who am I loyal to? What am I really willing to go out on a limb for?' I liked all those ideas."

The premise shares some DNA with *The Hunger Games*, as Tris is put through a gruelling initiation process of extreme physical tests and intense psychological simulations. As any reader of Veronica Roth's trilogy will tell you, rarely a passage goes by without some running, punching, shooting, knife-throwing or full-blown videogame-style, capital 'A' action.

Despite this, Woodley doesn't imagine her character as a Lara Croft-

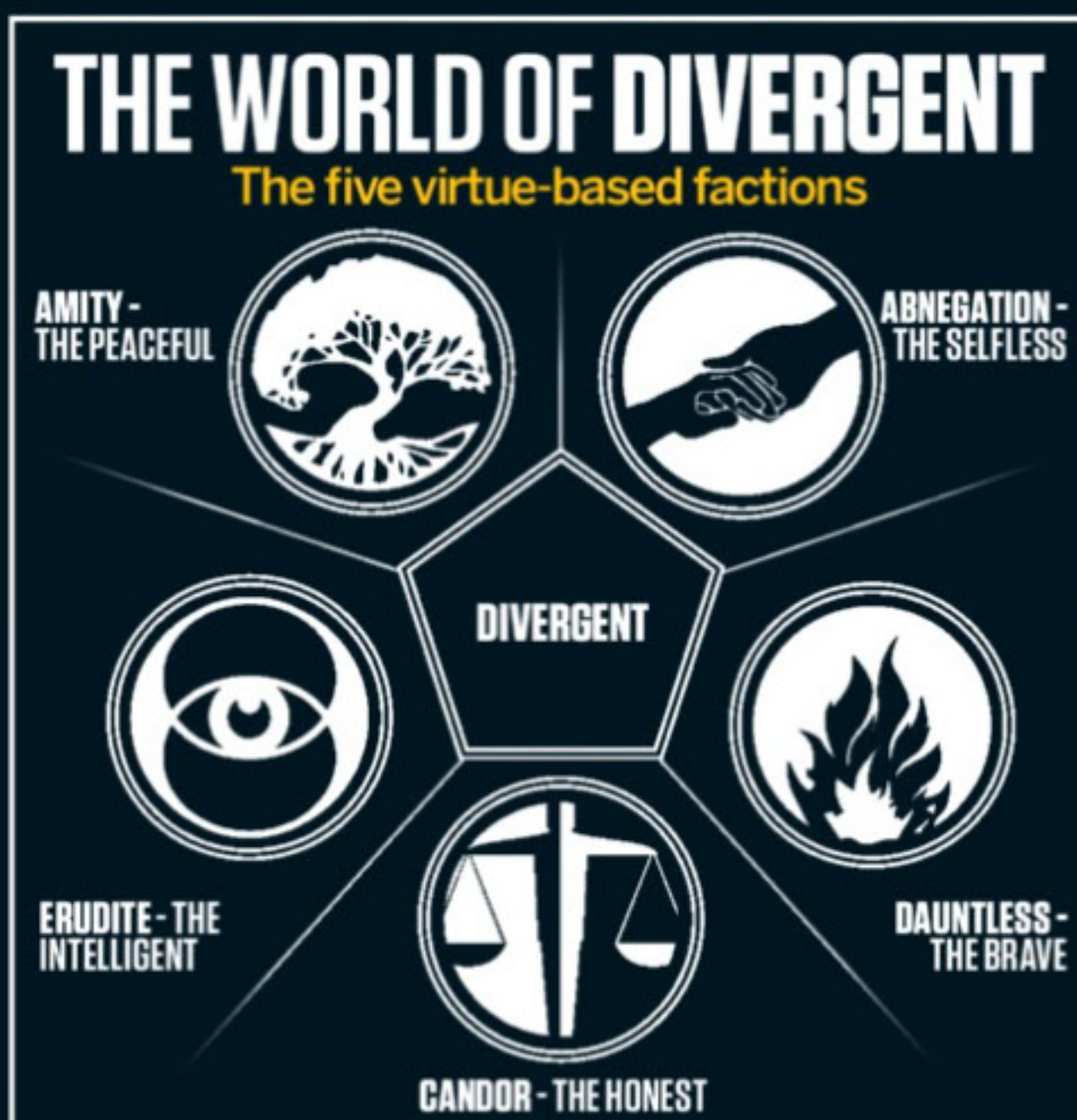
"SHE'S A NORMAL YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD TO FIGURE HERSELF OUT AND HELP THE COMMUNITY AROUND HER"
SHAILENE WOODLEY

type figure. "I never saw Tris as a superhero or action star," she tells us. "She's a normal young woman who had to figure herself out and help the community around her." Indeed, underneath the surface of this seemingly 'perfect' society lies a conspiracy to destroy all the Divergents, headed by Kate Winslet's antagonist Jeanine.

Burger says that his film will be a faithful adaptation of the book: "There are three villains. Tris has got a whole set of friends, and then there's her relationship with her parents and with Jeanine Matthews," he says. "We really worked hard to squeeze everything in and to come up with an idea for a movie that was even more fast-paced and condensed than usual."

Divergent will be released on 21 March 2014.

BACK WITH A BANG



If the books are anything to go by then there will be plenty of action.



Shailene Woodley stars as 'Divergent' Tris Prior.



THE BIG BANG IS BACK

The writers reveal Season Seven secrets

Cover your ears; Season Seven of *The Big Bang Theory* is about to explode onto our screens this month, and the writers dropped some spoilers at San Diego Comic-Con. Kicking off with the premiere episode, 'The Hofstadter Insufficiency', we'll see Leonard (Johnny Galecki) all at sea, conducting research with world-renowned physicist Stephen Hawking.

With the bespectacled so-called 'homunculus' away, his flatmate Sheldon (Jim Parsons) and on-again off-again girlfriend Penny (Kaley Cuoco) will be sharing some 'intimate secrets', while Bernadette (Melissa Rauch) and Amy (Mayim Bialik) will be bonding like atoms as they take a trip alone together.

It's not all fun for Wolowitz, though, as he's left picking up the pieces of Raj (Kunal Nayyar)'s broken heart following his break-up with Lucy at the end of last season. It shouldn't be too hard to find a new squeeze, since Raj

recently discovered he could talk to girls without being intoxicated. Showrunner Steve Molaro confirmed that they will explore this newfound ability when the show returns.

It seems that there could be some movement on the 'Shamy' front, however. When quizzed on whether Sheldon would ever consummate his relationship with Amy, Molaro said "It's a possibility" and that "Amy will continue trying to get her way." We're not going to hold our breath, though, since co-creator Bill Prady added: "It always baffles me how much Amy has gotten Sheldon to move... With Sheldon, you have a character who comes from a place of 'No, I'm not going to change.' It's a lot of interesting work in the room of, 'What if Amy did this?'"

One information tidbit we won't be able to shake while watching the new series is that most of the wacky relationship storylines are inspired by the writers' own experiences. "Remember when Bernadette wants to reconnect romantically with her husband, but she's really sick?" says Molaro. "That was my wedding night. I was really sick and all I could say was 'We have to consummate the marriage!'"



The Big Bang Theory Season Seven will air on E4 in November. Season Six is available on DVD and Blu-ray now.



With Will in jail, what are Dr Lecter's plans for Season Two?

HANNIBAL RISING

BACK FOR SECONDS

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL
INTERVIEWS STEVE NASH

Bryan Fuller spills the fava beans on Hannibal Season Two

After wowing audiences and critics with the stunning first season, we're thrilled that Bryan Fuller's gorgeously ghoulish *Hannibal* is returning for a second course. With twitchy investigator Will Graham (Hugh Dancy), the only one who knows the truth about his friend and psychiatrist Dr Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen) now behind bars, the stakes couldn't be higher.

"I don't think their relationship will be able to bounce back from this," laughs

Fuller. "We are not going to rush through Will in prison. There is this paradigm where they have to go to Hannibal Lecter to help solve crimes, but now we put Will Graham in that position."

After spending the majority of the season in a downward spiral, Fuller promises that Season Two will see Will Graham take control and go after Hannibal. "One of the things I was most excited about was that we saw Will hit rock bottom," he enthuses, "and the best thing about hitting rock bottom

SPOILER ALERT!

“WE ARE DEFINITELY UPPING THE ANTE IN GRISLY DEATHS”
— BRYAN FULLER

is that you have no fear, there's nothing left to lose, so I am excited about seeing a scrappy, feisty Will Graham who is coming out swinging."

It's not just Will that's changing. "The first episode will be like a pilot for what this new season will be," Fuller explains. "All of the dynamics have gone out the window. We are definitely upping the ante in grisly deaths, and it's going to be pretty startling when the audiences see it. We are trying to top ourselves!"



Hannibal will return next spring. Season One is available on DVD and Blu-ray from StudioCanal, priced at £21.99 and £24.50.

WHY IN FEAR IS 2013'S SCARIEST BRIT HORROR



Director Jeremy Lovering tells us about Iain De Caestecker's new film *In Fear*

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Ever got lost in the middle of nowhere? Ever been at the start of a relationship and wondered if you know the other person at all? Jeremy Lovering's excellent, largely improvised horror *In Fear* finds a new couple getting more and more lost in the Irish countryside and realising that something's very wrong.

Lovering decided that his leads Iain De Caestecker (*The Fades*) and Alice Englert (*Beautiful Creatures*) should know as little about each other as possible, and would not know what was going to happen at the end of each scene. "I was looking at fear as a state of being rather than being scared of spiders or whatever," the director explains. "I felt the only way to do it was



In Fear stars Iain De Caestecker of *Agents Of SHIELD* fame.

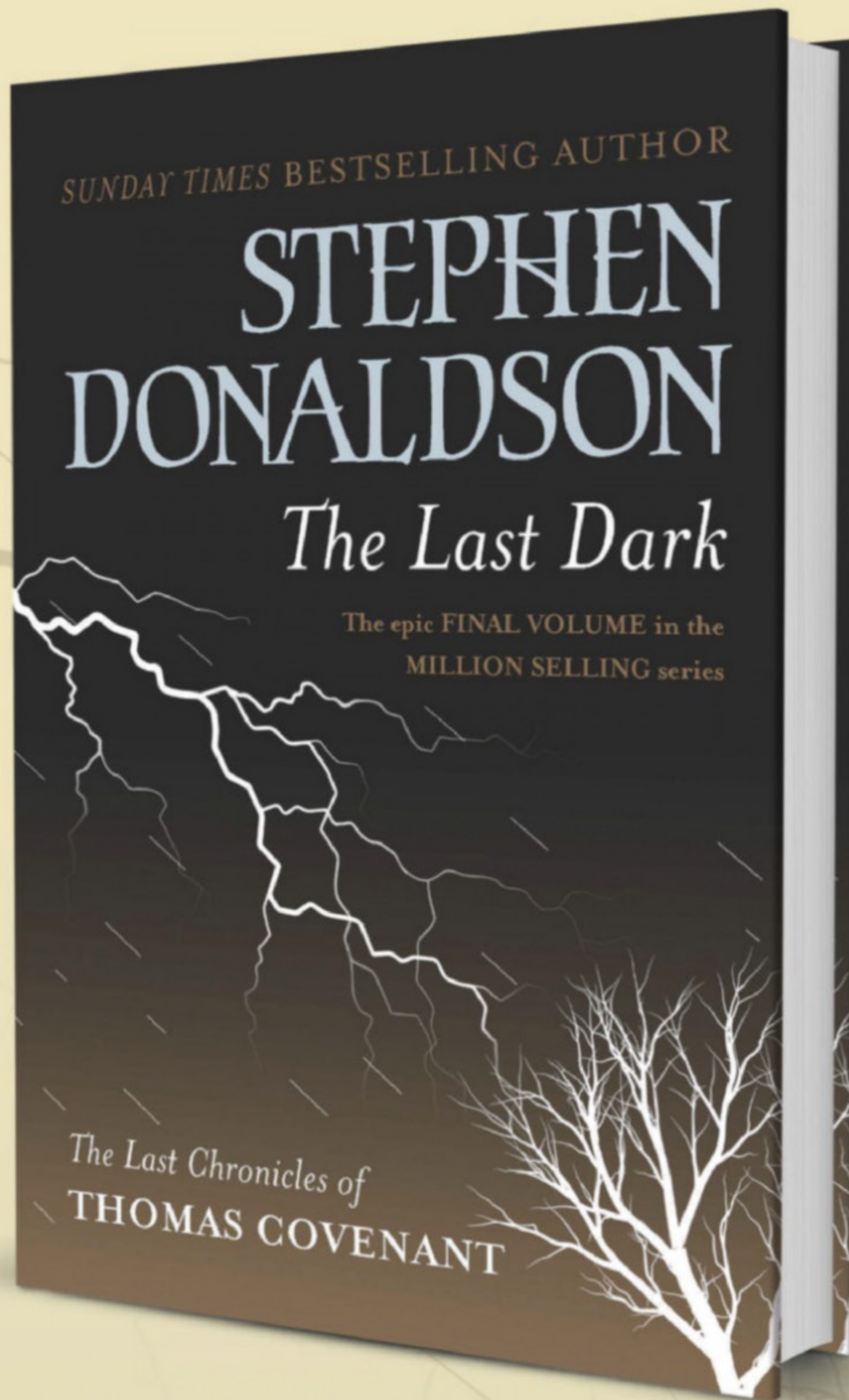
without a script and to try and make [the actors] scared. That way I could get the most authentic performance and I could build their characters with them according to how they responded. I wanted to look at a relationship that we know is going to be fragile, and how the element of sacrifice and betrayal fitted into that. If Iain and Alice were best mates, would I have cast them? Maybe not."

It's an incredibly tense film that benefits hugely from the exceptional performances

from De Caestecker and Englert, and Lovering is not surprised that the former has since found success on the other side of the Atlantic in *Agents Of SHIELD*. "He is absolutely exceptional. He's got this rare ability, which is that he can aim for the end without it feeling like it; just totally believable and that's quite a rare gift. He's doing some extraordinary things at the moment."

In Fear is in cinemas 15 November.

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Many of comics' top talent were there to meet fans.

EMBRACING CONVENTION

MELKSHAM'S COMIC HEROES

SciFiNow reader Holly Turner reports in from the second ever Melksham Comic Con

As a convention virgin, I was very excited to have my first experience of this world. Suited and booted as *Star Trek* reboot-era Lt Uhura, I arrived to a queue littered with other cosplayers. It was a promising start, and I certainly wasn't disappointed when the doors were opened.

This is a small convention, and the sheer variety of exhibitors there was really impressive. There were various independent comic makers, writers and artists, people selling clothes and accessories, merchandise, even fancy cakes. With so much to see I threw myself in with gay abandon and quickly became immersed. I was pleased that so many of the exhibitors were happy to take the time to chat with me, including Kieron Gillen (*Young Avengers*), who was understandably in high demand.

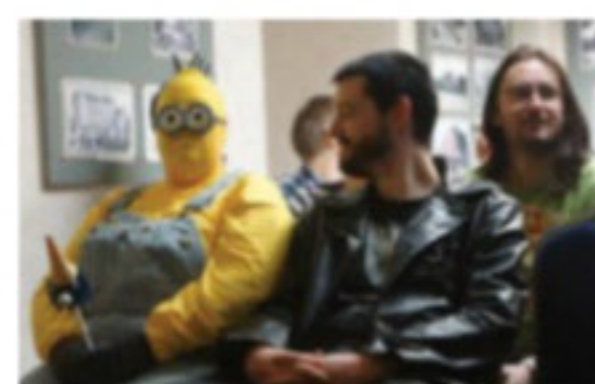
A range of panels were put on throughout the day, and I sat in on three of them. The first was the launch of *The Heavenly Chord* by Jon Lock (*Afterlife Inc*) and Nich Angell (*7STRING*). They discussed both their individual work and collaborations, including how they had gone about sharing out the work and how they had combined their two worlds. It proved to be a fascinating insight into the creative process.

The second panel I saw was with David Johnson, author of *The Crystal Quest*. This was advertised as a talk on writing children's sci-fi, but was actually about adapting a book for film. While his efforts were impressive and the talk interesting, this was not what I had gone to the panel for.

I also went to the final panel of the day, which was with Gillen, Simon Spurrier and Rob Williams. They each talked about how they had got into comics and their different interpretations of the medium. As someone with writing aspirations myself, I found their stories of getting into the area and getting noticed to be very informative indeed. The



The popular Melksham Comic Con returned for a second year.



Costumed fans were out in force.

way that all three bounced ideas off each other was fantastic, and the glimmer of bromance between Kieron and Simon was delicious to witness!

Overall, I can safely say that I thoroughly enjoyed this convention. This is only its second year, and the team are further expanding it to run over two days next year. It is a fantastic event that looks set to grow and grow, and I shall definitely be returning to it in the future. ☺

Melksham Comic Con was held on 31 August. Find out more at www.melkshamcomiccon.co.uk

TRENDING TOPICS

Your 3 most-read articles on SciFiNow.co.uk



1 STAR WARS: EPISODE VII TITLE RUMOURS
tinyurl.com/StarWars7Title



2 GRIMM SEASON FOUR EXCLUSIVE
tinyurl.com/GrimmS4



3 JENNIFER LAWRENCE ON MYSTIQUE
tinyurl.com/JLawMystique

ALIEN INSPIRATION

KICK-ASS COSPLAY OF THE MONTH

Celebrating your craftsmanship and creativity

STAHMA TARR (DEFIANCE)

REAL NAME: KIMBERLY NICOLE
FROM: FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

It's super-cool that you met Stahma actor Jaime Murray. What did she think of your look?

I still can't believe I met Jaime! It feels like a really awesome dream that I woke up from. At the first panel at Dragoncon, she had asked a friend of mine and myself to come up and take a photo with her after the panel was over. She took pictures of my outfit and mentioned how amazing it was, and that I had the look down. I figured I had done well if I just got the Murray stamp of approval!

The costume looks relatively straightforward. Did anything turn out to be more challenging than you anticipated?

I must have taken over a 100 screen grabs of her outfit in order to replicate it. I wasn't going to do it if I wasn't going to get it as close to the real thing as possible, so the whole outfit was a challenge!

Hunting fabric was a nightmare – I still don't know what fabric was used for the original one, but I would love to get my hands on it. After a couple months of hunting, my friend Judy had something close in her fabric stash, and it was just enough to make it work!

I took about four separate patterns and used specific parts as a base, then drastically altered them into what I needed on my dress form and created

the rest. The hood had me for a while, and I still think it's too small. As for the belt pattern, I was a founding member of the *Defiance* costume group on Facebook, and the leather worker from the show, Adam Smith, helped with instructions and pictures! I also ordered the same contact lenses worn on the show by 9mmsfx.

The make-up must have taken you a few goes to perfect...

I found about the make-up on *Defiance* and what they did. I practiced multiple times, so I would have it down before I got to the show. I had to use special brushes and products to make sure it went on even and didn't melt off. Working with iridescent powders was rough. I would take test photos with my phone with the flash while I was putting it on to make certain I was not missing spots, and that everything was blending properly and I had the right amount.

See more of Kimberly's work at [twitter.com/midorikai](#) and [facebook.com/knmidorikai](#).



© Brian Humphry



Love cosplay?
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DIY MOVIES

HOW TO WIN AT KICKSTARTER

UHF director on how to get the best from crowd-funding



With more and more films competing for your clicks on Kickstarter and failing to deliver, the likes of JP Bankes-Mercer's haunted house movie *Untitled Horror Film* wound up an overfunded exception...

What are the challenges involved in creating a professional-looking movie with reduced resources?

I had to cast from relatively unknown actors, get a location, choose a director of photography (Neil A Johnson) and camera (The Black Magic Cinema Camera) to make it as stylistic as possible. When you don't have a lot of money, it starts you thinking about story and character rather than show-stopping set pieces. I've trained on promos, ads and pilots, and it comes down to the people you use rather than equipment.

What made you use Kickstarter?

We ran out of money and didn't have a finished film! I had to drop scenes and integral story points due to a number of on-location problems that brought the production to a grinding halt; it even snowed at one point.



The fact that we reached 116 per cent funding was just one of the benefits of turning to Kickstarter. We touched base with 4,000 new fans/followers on Twitter, tapped into their mindset and discovered what kind of film *they* wanted to see. Being an independent filmmaker is a lonely journey, and you get trapped in the 'It's all about me and my vision' mindset. Kickstarter literally kicked me in the head and said "You make films for other people, not just yourself," and I'm grateful for that.

With the volume of productions turning to Kickstarter, how do you stand out?

Success is dependent on the quality of the project and your intentions. Kickstarter is an opportunity, but you have to earn it and connect with your audience on a creative level. You can't be afraid of making bold decisions; if something isn't working, change it. You only have a finite amount of time, and if you fail it's back to square one. We stood out because we demonstrated a desire to succeed. We re-evaluated our campaign strategy on a weekly basis, edited a trailer and built a strong presence on Twitter. For us, Kickstarter was the beginning; it's not just about finishing the movie, it's about building a fan base from a grass roots level.

Find out more about *Untitled Horror Film* at [www.shootingiswar.com](#).

Been to any conventions? Completed an epic fan project? Let us know about it on [Twitter](#) // [Facebook](#) // [Google+](#) and it might appear in Your Portal!



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BIG MOVIE

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

THERE IS PART OF
HER LIFE THAT
GALE WILL NEVER
UNDERSTAND. PEETA
IS THE ONLY ONE THAT
TRULY KNOWS WHAT
SHE WENT THROUGH

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

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GIRL ON FIRE

WORDS JODIE TYLEY
INTERVIEWS STEVEN NASH

THE HUNGER GAMES STAR
JENNIFER LAWRENCE ON
BECOMING AN UNINTENTIONAL
ICON, BOTH ON SCREEN AND
BEHIND THE SCENES, AS SHE
PREPARES TO GO BACK
INTO THE ARENA...

IT TOOK KATNISS EVERDEEN A SPLIT SECOND TO DECIDE TO LAUNCH HERSELF INTO THE HUNGER GAMES, BUT ACTRESS JENNIFER LAWRENCE HAD SOME RESERVATIONS BEFORE STICKING HER HAND IN THE AIR AND SCREAMING, "ME! TAKE ME!" SHE KNEW THAT BECOMING THE STAR OF A FRANCHISE meant that the odds were the entire world would be watching. "When I first signed on to it, I expected to have a lot of regrets," admits the 23-year-old on her decision to break out of independent movies for a big studio spectacular. "But fortunately I haven't. I am happy I did take the role. [If I hadn't] I would still probably be able to go to restaurants without becoming a nervous wreck or go to Starbucks and get my own coffee – that would be different. That would be lovely."

Since the movie became the highest-grossing young adult book adaptation of all time, beating *Harry Potter* and *Twilight*, the star's life has followed a similar trajectory to her character's. "Originally it was just reading scripts, talking to directors and making movies," she recalls, "and then all of a sudden it was like, 'Oh yeah, you have to wear high heels and make people like you.' So when I read the book, I was laughing at that, going 'Yeah, I know how that feels.'" While Lawrence has no trouble making people warm to her, she struggles with designer outfits just like her character. In *Catching Fire*, she will be facing the ultimate test by donning a bridal gown as Katniss and Peeta step up the charade of being madly in love. "The wedding dress was incredible because it's stunning, but I'm not good with big

resses – and stairs. I'm so bad," she says, reminding us of *that* moment when she tripped up on the stairs while collecting her Academy Award for Best Actress. But on set, there was no Hugh Jackman to come running to her aid. "I didn't even know that he did that until afterwards!" she cries. "I wish I had known."

Unlike the standard-issue starlet that floats down the red carpet, down-to-earth Lawrence is completely identifiable, a quality that she shares with her on-screen counterpart. Katniss isn't fulfilling a supernatural destiny or pining after a kiss from a cold dead lover; she's been thrown into an arena and forced to fight for her life. In this near-future dystopia, North America has been split into 12 districts, and every year one boy and girl from each region is entered into a televised slaughterfest. It's the government's way of controlling the populace through entertainment, and this malice is swallowed like a pill, just like the gladiatorial shows in Ancient Rome. This satire has never been more apt in an age where television is the drug, but *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* explores what happens when the masses start to hold their government to account, and Katniss was the catalyst. When she tricked the Capitol into crowning herself and fellow contestant Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson) dual winners, it revealed a chink in their armour, and now a rebellion is stirring.

In order to protect their families, the pair must convince President Snow (Donald Sutherland) that it was all in the name of love. This complicates matters with Katniss' best friend from ➤



BIG MOVIE

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

➤ home, Gale (Liam Hemsworth), but she can't help but feel closer to Peeta. "She's suffering from post-traumatic stress from the first Games, and she's trying to get her life back," says Lawrence. "She is living in Victors' Village now, she doesn't have to hunt any more – which makes her feel useless and bored – and there is part of her life that Gale will never understand. Peeta is the only one that truly knows what she went through. And when she has to go back to the Capitol, it's not a foreign world to her anymore. Not that she likes it, but she understands it now and how to work it." This is to her advantage, as she will be called back to the bright lights and over-indulgence of the metropolis soon enough. In honour of the 75th Hunger Games, they're calling for the previous victors to relive the horror one more time to show that even the strongest among them cannot overcome the Capitol. In short, Katniss is going back into the arena.

ADMITTEDLY, THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE IS PRETTY SIMILAR TO THE FIRST FILM, BUT DIRECTOR FRANCIS LAWRENCE (NO RELATION) SAYS THERE'S A LOT MORE RIDING ON THESE GAMES. "IT STARTED AS A SURVIVAL STORY ABOUT A GIRL WHO MAKES A SACRIFICE FOR HER sister, but it becomes a much more political story," he says. "The other districts are starting to look at her as a symbol of the rebellion; people are starting to fight back. The things that she has been asked to do have much greater stakes. It is no longer just her and her family; it has to do with the entire country." Much to her surprise, Katniss' Mockingjay pin that she wore as a token during the first Games has taken on new meaning. It has become a symbol of hope, which her personal stylist Cinna (Lenny Kravitz) uses as inspiration for a daring new frock – a long white gown that transforms when she twirls into black feathers and smoke: the Mockingjay incarnate.

The tributes' costumes are not just for glamour, as the more



THE BAKER BOY

Josh Hutcherson on Peeta's not-so-secret crush on Katniss

How would you describe Peeta in the second film?

At the beginning he's cold with Katniss. It's weird to be in love with somebody and them not be in love with you. As Peeta goes along the tour, he starts to feel angry about just how messed up it really is and how Katniss is right: this is so effed up to have to go round to the Districts and meet the families of the people that they just killed. When he gets put back into the Hunger Games, he has such a fire inside of him that there are a few times in this movie where I get to be more physical.

Would Katniss be the kind of woman you would fall in love with?

Phew. She's hard. She's a tough one. I love strong girls, for sure, but she might be a little too intense for me; I need someone a little more calm, I need someone a little more

go-with-the-flow, she seems a little too 'arghh' sometimes. I need someone a little more laid back than Katniss.

What was the most fun moment on set?

When we shot the scene where I had to propose to Katniss where I get down on one knee, the very first time I did it I got down on one knee and my pants ripped right underneath. That was a fun moment because we tried to keep the scene going, but all the while Stanley Tucci [who plays Hunger Games host Caesar Flickerman] and Jennifer are sitting there, I'm just like smiling, knowing it's ripped right in the middle, so we were kind of just laughing and we had to eventually stop. It was pretty funny but a little embarrassing. It's not a good omen, the first time I try to propose to a girl I rip my pants! I'm doomed, I'm absolutely doomed.

As ever, the politics of the Capitol will play a big part in proceedings.





“THE OTHER DISTRICTS ARE STARTING TO LOOK AT HER AS A SYMBOL OF THE REBELLION; PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO FIGHT BACK”

FRANCIS LAWRENCE

memorable they are, the more chance the wearer has of attracting sponsors that send gifts into the arena. You have to go some way to stand out in the Capitol, however, where you'd be classed as underdressed if you resembled the crazier cousin of Lady Gaga. It hammers home their wealth and celebrity, clashing horribly with the washed-out *Little House On The Prairie* vibe of the districts. We'll be seeing many more frills and sequins in the sequel, as one of the changes Lawrence made since taking the directorial reins from Gary Ross was to hire costume designer Trish Summerville. Recently, she's worked on *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*, another unique heroine who defies convention. "She did loads of great stuff [in this movie]" he tells us. "There are really amazing dresses that Effie [Elizabeth Banks] wears, and she got some Alexander McQueen museum pieces, and designed some amazing things for Katniss to wear for the chariots and the interviews." These are the pageant-style events the tributes must endure in the build-up to the Games – a dark mockery of talent shows' exploitation of individuals for our amusement.

Even though tuning into the event is mandatory for all citizens, the organisers like to keep the format fresh. This time, new Head Gamemaker Plutarch Heavensbee (Philip Seymour Hoffman) has swapped the forest setting for a more exotic location. "The arena itself becomes one of the bigger threats in this film," he reveals. "There is a big fight with monkeys, and there's poisonous fog where they have to

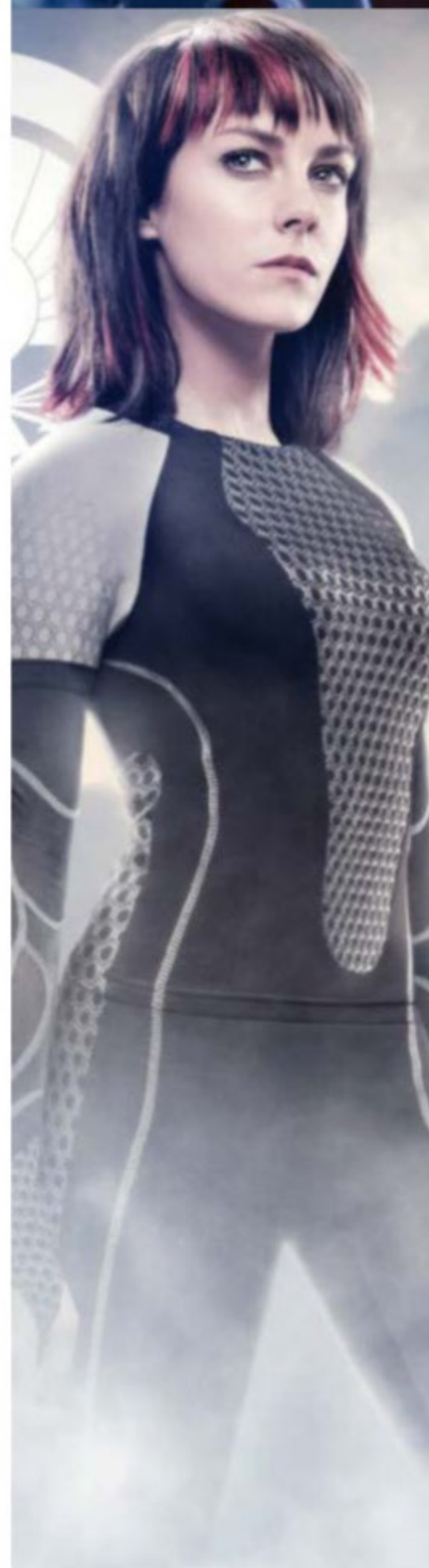
Jennifer Lawrence admits to having doubts when she first signed on to play Katniss.

run down steep jungle hillsides. Filming in Hawaii was pretty tough, because when you're shooting in the jungle the days are short [and] it's raining a lot, so it's very muddy and there are a lot of mosquitos. Mixed with IMAX and a lot of action, and people were slipping and getting hurt. That was tricky." Unlike the kid-on-kid action of last year, however, these competitors are all experienced killers, and as we will discover, some have adapted to life post-Games better than others. There are those who embrace their victory, like Enobaria (Meta Golding), who had her teeth sharpened into lethal points as a constant reminder of her savage win by tearing the throats out of her opponents. She's an exception, though, and in most cases survivors have turned to morphling, a powerful drug that blots out reality, or alcohol, like Katniss and Peeta's perennially tipsy tutor Haymitch (Woody Harrelson).

THE EFFECTS OF WAR IS A THEME THAT WILL BE EXPLORED. "THE NEXT CHAPTER REALLY OPENS THE WORLD UP IN A WHOLE DIFFERENT WAY," HE EXPLAINS, "WITH THE CHARACTERS, THE NARRATIVE AND THE MYTHOLOGY, BUT AT ITS CORE ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR.

That was what was really interesting to me: the idea that people are damaged by trauma and there is real loss. There's a grey zone and it is not always clear who the good guys and bad guys are. I worked hard to bring a humanity to the film; Jen [Lawrence] already brings a lot of that with her and the boys, but I think you guys will all see a different side of people like Effie and Haymitch now. I'm really pleased with how emotional the movie is, I think it is really powerful and it truly is about the characters, even with all the spectacle of the arena."

In order to secure a second win, Katniss and Peeta must see through their competitors' poker faces and form alliances. One of the few that appears trustworthy is trident-wielding tribute Finnick Odair, who will be played by *Snow White And The Huntsman* star Sam Claflin. It was a hotly anticipated spot of casting, since the character ranks highly with readers of Suzanne Collins' trilogy. Lawrence thinks he will live up to expectations: "Sam was one of the first people to





BIG MOVIE

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

➤ come in to read, and I thought he did a fantastic job," he says. "He is a very handsome, charismatic guy and really athletic, so I thought that he fit the physical aspect of Finnick, and he can be quite charming and fun, which is one of the things that we need to see early on. But he is actually an emotional guy, and it's that warmth that really locked me into him, because if you look at his character throughout all the books, 95 per cent of it is the attachment to the person that he loves and the trauma that he is going through, not the charming rogue that he presents himself to be at the beginning of *Catching Fire*."

AT FIRST IT SEEMS THAT FINNICK WILL JOIN PEETA AND GALE IN THE FIGHT FOR KATNISS' AFFECTIONS, BUT THERE'S A CROWD SO THERE'S NO NEED FOR A CONGA. SPEAKING OF THE LOVE TRIANGLE, IT'S GOING TO BE PLAYING A MUCH BIGGER PART IN THE STORY GOING FORWARD.

"It is such an important factor in the third book, and Peeta becomes a big objective for her," he explains. "So it was really important to start seeing what each of the guys represents in terms of the larger landscape." Behind the scenes, however, there's an entirely different dynamic between the trio. "Josh [Hutcherson] and Jen [Lawrence] are like brother and sister; they love each other to death, but they bicker and play around a lot," he says, reminding us of the time when Lawrence accidentally gave her co-star concussion during stunt training. "Liam [Hemsworth] is the quiet one of the three – softer spoken – but I think that his performance is going to surprise people in this. He did a fantastic job in taking on the role he needs to take on for the rest of these stories. He's not in as much of this film, but he

Donald Sutherland returns as the villainous President Snow.

THE ARENA ITSELF BECOMES ONE OF THE BIGGER THREATS IN THIS FILM

FRANCIS LAWRENCE

Director Francis Lawrence is embracing the more political aspects of the story.

FISHERMAN'S FRIEND

Sam Claflin on working hard to become "sex god" Finnick Odair

What kind of challenges did you come up against?

The physical challenge proved quite difficult. Having read the books and being totally aware of what a lot of fans' reactions were to my casting, it spurred me on to want to work harder and achieve the goal of basically becoming a sex god. Whether or not I got there is not for me to decide, but all I can say is that I tried my damndest.

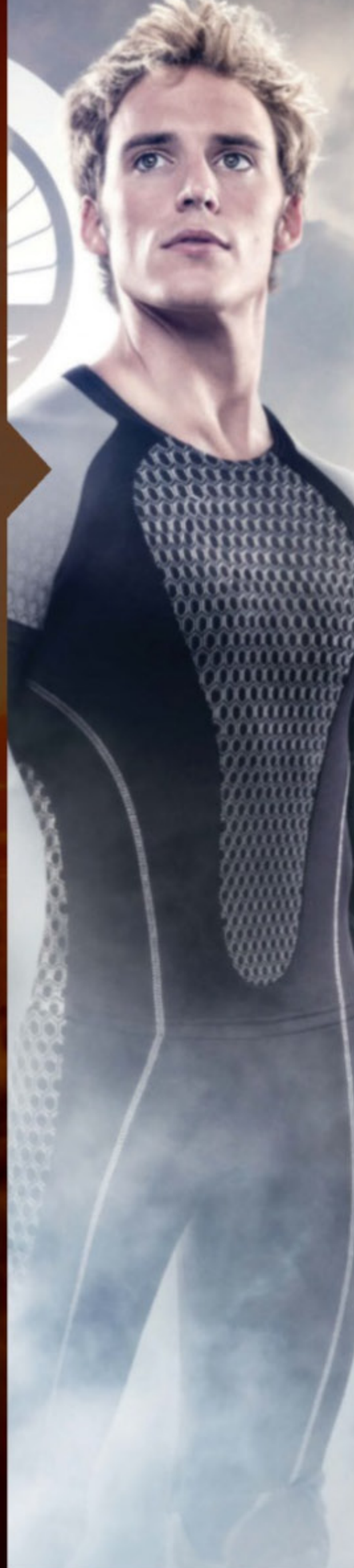
Aside from hitting the gym, how else did you prepare for this role?

You have to be aware of what is coming up, especially with Finnick, where the journey that he goes on in the third book is quite drastic. I had to familiarise myself with that story to have those elements and insecurities within the second film, so when the moments come when he is pushed to the edge, you know why he is being pushed at that particular moment, and why Annie Cresta [Finnick's girlfriend, who will be played by Stef Dawson in *Mockingjay*] means that much to him.

[At first, Francis Lawrence] was like, "Can you just try him a little more vulnerable?" I was like, "No, he's not vulnerable; he's arrogant, he's confident." I had a very two-dimensional outlook on Finnick's life. But what is great about not only Finnick's character, but all the characters, is that they are so three-dimensional; they all have their complexities.

Without revealing any spoilers, can you tell us more about the direction of *Catching Fire*?

I think what this story is about is fighting for what you think and believe in. Katniss believes that, and all the victors know that them getting dragged into the arena is wrong. They thought they'd done with that, they should be free – they know they have been cheated. When Katniss comes into his life, he is able to go, 'You know what? You are the inspiration to all of us, you are the symbol of rebellion, the symbol of standing up for yourself,' and hopefully that will bring that out in everyone.



CATCHING FIRE

Girl On Fire



If that's possible, the outfits are even more garish this time round.

will be in a lot more of *Mockingjay*."

Unsurprisingly, given *The Hunger Games*' young adult forebears, the final book in the trilogy will be split over two films. It's building towards a weighty message about defending your beliefs, just as Jennifer Lawrence did when she first signed on for the role. By flat-out refusing to lose weight, she defied superficial critics who claimed she didn't look 'hungry' enough to play the lead. "In the first movie, when it was obviously being talked about, like, 'It's *The Hunger Games*, you have to lose ten pounds,' I said, 'We have control over this role model. Why would we make her something unobtainable and thin?'" she tells us. "This is a person that young girls will be looking up to, so why not make her strong? Why not make her beautiful and healthy and fit? I was very adamant about that, because I think that our industry doesn't take enough responsibility for what it does to our society. I remember what it felt like to be 14 years old, looking at a Victoria's Secret model and thinking, 'I'll never look like that.' I don't want to make someone feel like that."

Instead, these films offer encouragement and hope by showing what a single voice can achieve, even when the odds aren't in our favour. "They explore what happens to us as a society when we start taking humanity from people," she adds, "and that moment when they start becoming entertainment pieces and not humans – like celebrities." Lawrence is beginning to understand what it means to be something of an 'entertainment piece' herself, but like her character, she would throw herself into the arena all over again given the chance. "I was 14 when I read a script, and I was like, 'This is it.' And that's why I don't have any regrets, because as much as it can be annoying and it can be sad trying to get used to this new life, I just have to do this. It's a feeling that you get when you are doing something that you are meant to do. I couldn't not do that, after finding it." ☺

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire is in cinemas 22 November.



Liam Hemsworth will have a bigger role in *Mockingjay*.



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THE HUNGER GAMES SURVIVAL GUIDE

YOUR HANDBOOK TO SURVIVING IN YA'S DEADLIEST ARENA



START HUNTING

Food is scarce, so you'll need to hunt if you want to avoid opting to receive tesserae (a scant supply of grain in return for entering your name into the reaping multiple times). Hunting is illegal, and if you're caught you'll be killed, or worse, have your tongue cut out and forced to be a slave in the Capitol, but Katniss and Gale think it's a risk worth taking. Archery skills also mean you'll never go hungry in the Hunger Games.

"GALE AND I AGREE THAT IF WE HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN DYING OF HUNGER AND A BULLET IN THE HEAD, THE BULLET WOULD BE MUCH QUICKER"



EAT HEALTHILY AND SAFELY

In a world where food is scarce, author Suzanne Collins realised the importance of wild plants. She even named some of her characters after them, including Katniss, Primrose and Rue. Naturally, the best botanists will stand a good chance of surviving, and Katniss' knowledge of the poisonous nightlock actually saved Peeta's life. It was too late for Foxface from District 5, though, who greedily ate his deadly snack.

"THE MEAT AND PLANTS FROM THE WOODS COMBINED WITH THE EXERTION IT TOOK TO GET THEM HAVE GIVEN ME A HEALTHIER BODY THAN MOST OF THOSE I SEE AROUND ME"



SPECIALISE IN A SKILL

During the private training sessions, the tributes can choose to work at any of the stations, from camouflage and knot tying to knife throwing and archery. It's useful to master a new skill while you have the chance, as you never know what weapon you'll get your hands on in the arena. Don't underestimate weightlifting either, as it can stop a bunch of sniggering career tributes from looking at you like you're their next meal.

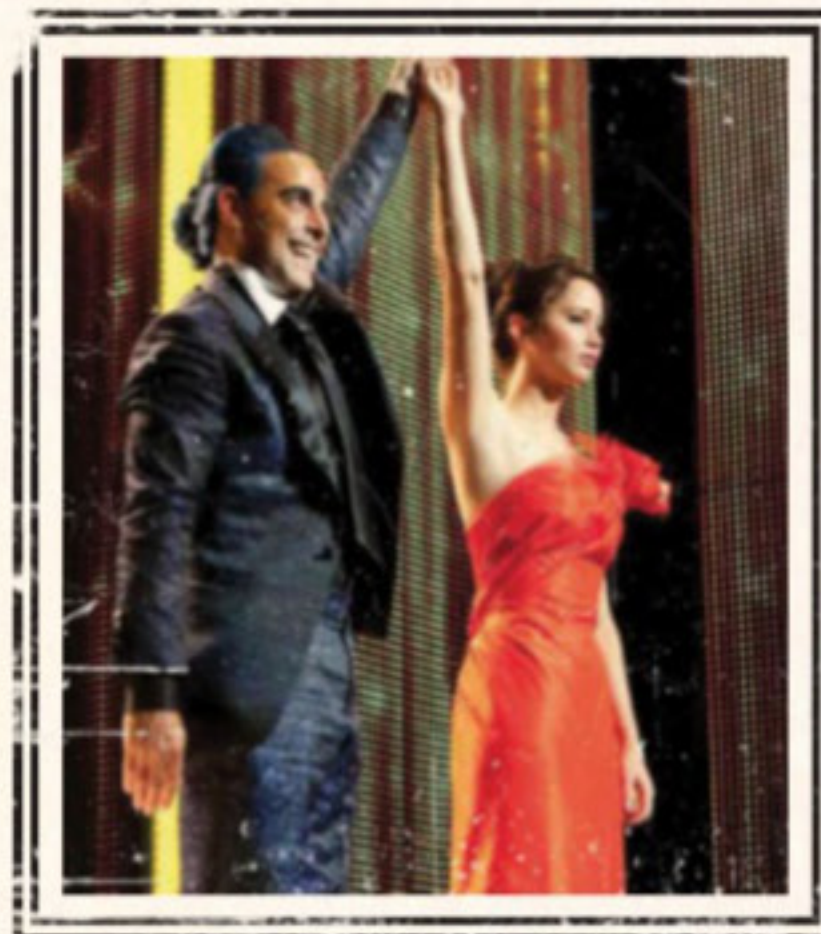


"I'M SURE THE ARENA WILL BE FULL OF BAGS OF FLOUR FOR ME TO CHUCK AT PEOPLE"



MAKE AN IMPRESSION

If you want to get ahead in the Games, make an effort to stand out in the build-up coverage. There are 24 tributes and only a finite number of sponsors that will send gifts into the arena. These could mean life or death, as Katniss discovered when she received ointment for her burnt thigh. Wear what your stylist tells you to wear and do what your mentor advises you to do, even if it means snogging the boy from back home.



"NO ONE WILL FORGET ME. NOT MY LOOK, NOT MY NAME. KATNISS. THE GIRL WHO WAS ON FIRE"

THE 75TH HUNGER GAMES ARENA

A GUIDE TO THE UNIQUE LAYOUT OF THE SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION

**SPOILER
ALERT**



INTERVIEW

Alfonso Cuarón

WORDS
JONATHAN HATFULL
INTERVIEWS
STEVE NASH

FROM HARRY POTTER'S DARKER ADOLESCENCE TO THE DESPONDENT NEAR-FUTURE OF CHILDREN OF MEN, **DIRECTOR ALFONSO CUARÓN** HAS MADE AN ART OF COUPLING EVOCATIVE VISUALS WITH EMOTIONAL RESONANCE. **WE TALK TO THE HOLLYWOOD HEAVYWEIGHT** TO DISCOVER JUST HOW NEW FILM GRAVITY IS PUSHING BOTH OF THOSE THINGS TO THEIR LIMIT...

GRAVITY DIRECTOR **ALFONSO CUARÓN** ON PUTTING THE HUMANITY IN SCI-FI

STAR MAN



© Gage Skidmore

IF THERE'S A DIRECTOR WHO CAN BRING HUMANITY TO THE COLD WILDERNESS OF SPACE, IT'S ALFONSO CUARÓN. THE DIRECTOR MADE THE IMPROBABLE JUMP FROM *Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN*, A MEXICAN ARTHOUSE FILM ABOUT TWO YOUNG MEN ON A JOURNEY OF SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL exploration, to *Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban*, bringing adolescence and acclaim to JK Rowling's universe. *Children Of Men* cemented his reputation as a filmmaker who could deliver breathtaking visuals with no cost to the story or characters. His new film *Gravity* places pushes that balancing act to a new level, with Sandra Bullock's astronaut alone and drifting through space. The raw impact of her character's emotional journey and Cuarón's determination to make the film as realistic as possible combine to make it one of the most breathtaking films we've seen all year.

The relationship between the two leads is so important. Would you say the relationship is always the cornerstone of any story you tell?

Yeah, I think so, or the human experience. And the core of human experience is relationships, or the lack of, which is the case in this film. I mean, there is a case to be made that this film is nothing ➤



INTERVIEW

Alfonso Cuarón

but a metaphorical journey. Forget about space; if I tell you this is a story of a woman who is drifting towards the void, a victim of her own inertia, getting farther and farther from human connection and living in her own bubble, you know what I mean? So that is this film. And it is a woman whose adversities in life have taken her to that bubble, and now she is experiencing other adversities. She has to make this choice of just falling into the void or trying to ground herself and put her feet on the floor.

That is literature, that is art, that is cinema, and from what great artwork has been made in the past; when you read all the old tragedies, or even ancient epics, we're talking about characters fighting Minotaurs. What is relevant about those mythical stories is the archetypal and emotional truth behind it. What I mean is that when great science fiction works, it is because of that, not so much because of all the other gimmicks around it. The other stuff is fun, but what really drives forward stuff is the human connection.

The science is obviously very important too. It's a shock at first when the debris starts to hit and there is no noise. And even when they are undoing the bolts, you can only hear vibrations, as only the vibrations would transmit to the ears and brain.

Was that decision purely to reflect the actual physics of space?

We started with the cards that said "There's no sound in space," so we were very rigorous about that. Unless they touch and interact with objects, there is no sound; the only thing that we have is a big explosion. By doing simulations we learned that there would be not sound, but there would be a shockwave that in your body you would feel. So we didn't hear the explosion; we just did the shock. But what we did use is music; [composer] Steven Price composed music in surround. The conventional

way of using music is that music comes right and left of the screen in the centre; here, the music comes from different speakers. Different sounds and harmonies come from different speakers, and they are constantly moving, and one harmony clashes with another harmony, creating a third harmony, so it is helping to create that disorientating kind of feel in which, like in space where there is no up and there is no down, with music there is no right, left or centre.

Did you look at other set-in-space movies like 2001: A Space Odyssey for inspiration?

Look, if I look at 2001, I just get paralysed. I quit filmmaking and I go to work in McDonalds. So you don't do that. You know who Rocco Siffredi is? [Further research leads us to discover that he is, in fact, an Italian porn star] OK, try to have sex with your girlfriend after having a shower next to Rocco Siffredi.

OK, so maybe not 2001, but what about Apollo 13 or even Solaris, something like that?

Solaris falls into a different realm, because Solaris is an exploration of memory in which the physics of space don't really matter. So as a space thing, as much as I love Solaris,

it is not really a space movie per se, you know? I concentrated on looking at films in which space exploration was relevant and the physics in space were relevant. There are many space films, but there are just a handful of films that have taken the physics of space really seriously. And I would say, "OK, how the heck did they do it?" So Apollo 13, The Right Stuff, Marooned and Woman In The Moon by Fritz Lang. There are many space movies I love; my favourite is maybe A Trip To The Moon by Georges Méliès, but I was not going to learn anything about physics in space with Méliès, you know? Also, I love Alien, but Alien is a horror movie in which, in many ways, the

IF I LOOKED AT 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, I'D JUST GET PARALYSED AND QUIT FILMMAKING
ALFONSO CUARÓN



Cuarón looked to classic space-set films for inspiration.

THE THREE AMIGOS

How Mexico's hottest directors conquered Hollywood

Guillermo del Toro, Alfonso Cuarón and Alejandro González Iñárritu have continued to collaborate and offer support and advice with each other's films during the new wave of Mexican cinema in the 21st Century, forming Cha Cha Cha Films to allow each other and budding filmmakers creative independence. Here's a selection of their collaborations...

1989-90 LA HORA MARCADA



Directors: Del Toro and Cuarón
Mexican anthology horror TV series. Del Toro has stated that he's pleased it's so hard to find.

1993 CRONOS



Writer/Director: Del Toro
Special Thanks: Cuarón
Del Toro's arthouse vampire debut is immaculately designed and wonderfully perverse.

2000 AMORES PERROS



Writer/Director: Iñárritu
Special Thanks: Del Toro and Cuarón
This gritty Mexican debut from Iñárritu is a searing thriller and the first time all three are credited together.

2001 Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN



Writer/Director: Cuarón
Thanks: Del Toro
Special Thanks: Iñárritu
After the lacklustre Great Expectations, Cuarón made his mark with this hilarious and passionate drama.

2006 PAN'S LABYRINTH



Writer/Director: Del Toro
Producer: Cuarón
Thanks: Iñárritu
Del Toro's masterpiece has kept its reputation as one of our best modern fairy tales. Cuarón produced, while del Toro thanked Iñárritu for cutting 15 minutes from the film.

2008 RUDO Y CURSI



Producers: Cuarón, del Toro and Iñárritu
This football comedy starring Y Tu Mamá También duo Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna was the first film produced by the three as Cha Cha Cha Films.

2013 PACIFIC RIM



Writer/Director: Del Toro
Special Thanks: Cuarón and Iñárritu
The most entertaining film of the summer had ten minutes trimmed by Iñárritu, while Cuarón helped out with the editing.

2013 GRAVITY



Writer/Director: Cuarón
Special Thanks: Del Toro
Del Toro returned the favour with Cuarón's space drama, helping him to cut a few minutes and suggesting some visual gags.



Although real-world science was observed, Cuarón wasn't beholden to it.



The aim was to make Sandra Bullock "as much a character as the space behind her."

spaceship is the haunted house, so it's not about the physics in space.

How did that long, sickening first long shot come about, with the motion of the astronauts and the shuttle with everything spinning?

It's something I've been exploring with Emmanuel Lubezki, the cinematographer, in our last few films, doing very long-length shots, for two reasons: one is rather than cutting to close-ups, we want to keep character and environment, give the same value to the two of them and keep one thing from the other. In other words, Sandra Bullock is as much a character as the space that is behind her, and one informs the other, being almost a metaphor of the other.

Another thing is that to witness an experience that is happening in real time and the camera is just there to witness. Also, we wanted this film to look like an IMAX documentary – those films are one continuous take because they don't have the luxury of cutting around. It was all this combination of things, and the most important thing was we wanted a photo-real rendering, not a science fiction/comic-book rendering of that reality. With those shots, what we wanted is that eventually you stop witnessing it as if you are just watching a movie about that, but you become a third character floating in space. The camera is reacting as if it was floating in zero gravity.

You couldn't have 3D cameras because of the confined sets you shot in, right?

Not in that set, no.

So when did you decide you wanted to do it in 3D?

From the script. The original title of this film was *Gravity: A Space Suspense In 3D*, but that was in the days in which 3D was still cool.

If you knew you couldn't film it in 3D, how did you approach the transfer process, because conversion has been very hit and miss?

This film lent itself perfectly well for conversion, because 85 per cent of the film is CG, and you do CG in 3D so you just have to convert the pieces that are not: the 15 per cent of the frame. There was a couple of shots that honestly – I'm not going to tell you which ones – I would have preferred to shoot native, but it was only a couple of shots. If I was doing a complete live-action film, then yes, I definitely would need to do everything with 3D cameras.

The important thing is that the treatment of this film was conceived from the very beginning, and we started developing the 3D of the film four years ago when we were doing the pre-vis. As soon as we had three to five minutes of pre-vis, we would send it to Chris Parks, our 3D wizard, and then that 3D would start dictating the shoot, so we would go back say, "Look, I think we should redo this, because let's try to have less foreground." One: for it to feel not as a gimmick, but just the way you see, to keep it as if you are witnessing all that action with two eyes. So we would create a more immersive experience, but also two: to make it pleasant to the eye.

The problem with 3D, particularly these converted films, is that they are not designed as 3D, and you

have all these cuts, you have all these changes of parallax all the time – it's exhausting, because it's as if you are looking, you are focusing here, then you are focusing there. Imagine reading a book where you are reading the same phrase, but from over there to close by. That's what happens, and that's what people get pissed off with about 3D.

Sandra Bullock said she spoke to astronauts. Did you speak to NASA and work closely with them?

Well, not with NASA as an institution, but we talked with a lot of astronauts and people involved in the space program, and their input was fundamental. It was very humbling, but remember something: this film is not a documentary, it is a fiction in which we tried to be, in the frame of our fiction, plausible and accurate, but we have to take a lot of freedoms. Thanks to the input of some of these advisors, we would realise something was absolutely ridiculous, so we got rid of it, and some of the stuff they were like, "Yes, well, that is highly unlikely unless such and such would happen," so we would adapt that. They would say, "OK, for them to go from this point to this point is not likely because they are on two different orbital planes, unless they had moved the orbit closer, if they had moved the Hubble to the orbit of the space station, that would be a good idea because of maintenance, so that would make sense." So you know what, in my movie that's what happened. I'm not going to explain it, but that's what happened. ☺

Gravity is in cinemas from 8 November.

“THIS IS NOT
A REMAKE;
IT’S A
RETELLING
OF THE BOOK”
CHLOË GRACE MORETZ

PROM QUEEN SCREAM

WORDS JOE NAZZARO

37 YEARS ON FROM BRIAN DE PALMA'S **HORROR** HIGHLIGHT, AND **PROM NIGHT** HAS COME AROUND ONCE MORE FOR STEPHEN KING'S TROUBLED TEEN. WE TALK TO STARS **CHLOË GRACE MORETZ** AND **JULIANNE MOORE**, AS WELL AS THE CREATORS, TO FIND OUT WHY 2013'S **CARRIE** IS MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER HORROR REMAKE...

In 1974, an unknown, Maine-born writer named Stephen King published his first novel, called *Carrie*. The story, about a repressed teen named Carrie White who uses her newly discovered telekinetic powers to wreak vengeance on her high school tormenters, launched King's career and was subsequently adapted in 1976 by director Brian De Palma as a feature film starring Sissy Spacek as the troubled teen.

Three and a half decades after Spacek's Oscar-nominated performance, the role has been taken over by actress Chloë Grace Moretz in a remake directed by Kimberly Peirce (*Boys Don't Cry*, *Stop-Loss*) and featuring Julianne Moore as mom-from-Hell Margaret White.

While Hollywood is rife with remakes at the moment, producer Kevin Misher believes the time is right for a new version of *Carrie*. "It's been just about 40 years since the book," he elaborates, "but generationally for a movie that's about high school students, I don't think high school students really know it. One of the things we discovered about the original material

is that *Carrie* is the first *Twilight* in a way, because it was a book that spoke to teens on a supernatural basis.

"I think the best horror – and Stephen King writes about this quite a bit – is when it's a reflection of its time. Even though *Carrie* was written in the Seventies and doesn't understand the complex society we're living in right now, it's still a great opportunity for a supernatural metaphor. That's what I think horror does best: it's a reflection of the anxiety in most homes. That's why we felt, rather than just remaking an old movie, this was a piece of material that could potentially speak to a new audience. On the one hand, you have a movie about teens that can speak to a new teen audience that doesn't know about it, but on the other hand you have a nostalgic audience that has a very fond affection for the original movie and the book, so that represented a very real opportunity, both creatively and economically."

While King's original book takes place in the late Seventies, the new film draws heavily from the source material while bringing it into the present day. "It's very respectful of the



BIG MOVIE

Carrie



HONOUR THY MOTHER

Julianne Moore on becoming Margaret White

For actress Julianne Moore, the challenge of playing Carrie's religious zealot of a mother was trying to figure out exactly what made her tick. "We went right back to the book," she explains, "so if you've read the book there's not going to be anything in there that will surprise you, but there was stuff I hadn't remembered from when I read it as a kid.

"The thing about Margaret that was fascinating to me was that she was involved with this religious sect, but became dissatisfied with that sect and thought, 'It's not strict enough!' so she peeled off with this guy she met, and they formed their own church. They would preach to one another, and they basically isolated themselves from society.

"When Margaret was pregnant, she was so naive and sheltered and isolated that she didn't even know she was pregnant; she thought she had cancer. And then her husband dies and she delivers the baby by herself, not even knowing what is happening. All of that stuff is what Stephen King put in the novel, so it was startling, upsetting and rich just in terms of characterisation, thinking about who this woman is, how isolated she is and how important this relationship to her child is."

The timelessness of *Carrie's* themes made it ripe for reimagining.



original classic book," confirms Misher, "but obviously we've updated it in the ways that teenagers communicate with one another, for example, so they're texting now and they have iPhones and whatnot. So we strove for authenticity with today's audience, but we really did use and mine the King book for quite a bit of the story.

"Our thing was when in doubt, use the original book as the bible. For instance, there's a song that Julianne Moore sings, which is the song that King suggested that Margaret White sang to her daughter. Even with things like the addresses on the houses or the day in which the prom occurred, we tried to use the book."

Perhaps so, but there are plenty who regard the De Palma film as a genre classic, and no doubt regard the remake with trepidation. "I have to say," reflects Misher's fellow producer J Miles Dale, "having done *The Thing* [prequel] and feeling the weight of a well-loved classic, when our movie landed I feel like it was unfairly critiqued, where the John Carpenter movie was made out to be *Citizen Kane* and ours was *Shithole 4*, I felt, 'OK, how do you get in there and put a different spin on it?'

"With *The Thing*, I felt we had done that by making it a prequel, where it had to blend seamlessly into the Carpenter movie, but with *Carrie* we had the weight of the first movie, De Palma, Stephen King, Sissy Spacek and Piper Laurie, so we had all of that to overcome, and you've got to do something different.

"Granted, *The Thing* was about 35-year-old guys with beards out in the middle of the Arctic, while *Carrie* was about teen girls bullying in high school, so that never gets old and is apt for re-examination, because it's current and relevant all the time. Our big challenge was casting the right actors, which we feel we did especially with Julianne and Chloë, who are the best at what they do in their respective categories. But overcoming the expectations of all the people who knew about the original was absolutely the biggest challenge."

CARRIE IS THE FIRST TWILIGHT, BECAUSE IT WAS A BOOK THAT SPOKE TO TEENS ON A SUPERNATURAL BASIS

KEVIN MISHER

One way to deflect inevitable comparisons with the De Palma film was to enlist Peirce, a filmmaker who had a very different agenda for the 2013 version. "It was great to look at this film from a woman's perspective," agrees Dale. "It's a mother-daughter story, the story of a teenage girl; it's all of those things, so you can definitely argue that a woman's perspective was key, and Kim brought that. She was certainly bound to understand some of the female relationships, so Kim definitely lent something to that."

"I think I took a page out of the novel and really made it a mother-daughter

story," continues Peirce, "So Carrie is the protagonist, but the mother-daughter story from beginning to end is the heart of the story and delivers you all the way through. I also maybe made Margaret White a little more empathetic, as I tend to do. In *Boys Don't Cry*, the guys who rape and kill Brandon Teena were loathsome, so they were very hard to relate to, but if you didn't relate to them you didn't relate to Brandon.

"There's a thing [playwright and journalist] Norman Mailer talks about, which is that if you're writing about negative

characters, you have to maintain the authenticity of that negativity, but you also have to give the audience a way in, otherwise the audience will just tune it out. I would say I applied that to the mother, her love for her daughter and the use of religion, because I want you to love religion in this movie and Margaret's

love of her religion.

"I did the same thing with the depiction of Chris [Carrie's main tormenter, played by Portia Doubleday]... in my adaptation you want to get inside Chris and understand why she attacks Carrie and why she cares enough to go to a pig farm to find the blood of a pig. In order to build that kind of obsession, you need to love that character and keep giving them some causality, so we built that up with Chris, who gets kicked out of school and can't go to the prom. She feels that other people are taking up Carrie's cause, so there is a consequence to what happens."



CARRIE Prom Scream



Not surprisingly, finding an actress for the eponymous role was no small task. The production cast a wide net before casting Moretz, who had already established her genre credibility with films like *Kick-Ass*, *Let Me In* and *Dark Shadows*. “If you’ve seen her, she’s perfect,” enthuses Misher. “When we started to talk about who Carrie was going to be, it was a very lengthy search, but she’s an amazing actress beyond her years. She’s so much younger than Sissy Spacek, who I think was 28, but for the anxiety of the time she worked perfectly for who she was and how she played it.”

The dilemma in casting a high school-age actress was the number of actual shooting hours available for a minor, but in Moretz, the producers felt they made the right choice. “We talked about that,” concedes Dale, “but realised the important thing was to cast the right person. I told [MGM chief] John Glickman before we started that it was going to take a little more time with a younger actress like Chloë, and he said, ‘That’s fine; if that’s what it takes.’”

“The movie was going to shoot for 45 days before it was Chloë, and we added five days right away, so to their credit they understood the value of having her and stepped up to the plate in terms of what it was going to take to make the movie with Chloë, but she’s a total pro. She was 15 when we did the movie, but she’s not like any other 15-year-old; Chloë is mature beyond her years, so that made life a lot easier. There were no problems, no extra takes, there were no girl issues.

THE GORE THE MERRIER

How Carrie upped the ante with the buckets of blood

As any horror movie pro will tell you, blood is everything. It’s not just the viscosity or quantity of blood seen on screen; the actual colour can make a difference in terms of getting a PG-13 or R rating.

With *Carrie*, where the lead character is literally drenched in blood for most of the film’s final act, a great deal of discussion went into just about every aspect of that topic. According to director Kimberly Peirce, “We did a lot of research and development into how thick the blood should be. We literally had thick blood, medium blood and thin blood. Should we use five, four or three gallons? How high should it be? Should it be a cascade? It took forever to finally get it right.”

“I did a sample board for King,” adds make-up department head Jordan Samuel, “that had eight to 12 sections on it that were broken down in terms of fresh blood, bright red, arterial blood, all the way down to blood that was a few days old, as well as patina samples with dirt and soot mixed in. Depending on where we were in the timeline, the colour of blood that would be overlaid on Chloë’s tattoo would be according to those samples. The blood was broken down as far as the actual bucket pour and got progressively darker scene by scene.

“The blood was a muddy brown-red to begin with because it had been in the bucket for so long. I wouldn’t want to imagine what a real bucket of pig’s blood would smell like after it had sat around for a day!”

“I think there is a certain vulnerability to having it be a little younger that we thought was really well served by Chloë. There are only a handful of actresses that could play that role, whether it was Saoirse Ronan, Hailee Steinfeld or the girl from *The Descendants* [Shailene Woodley], but Chloë is very impressive. As I said, it was a little tougher to schedule, but she was such a pro that she actually saved us time in a lot of other ways.”

Already a showbusiness veteran at 16, Moretz acknowledges that plenty of remakes are done as cash grabs, happily riding the coat-tails of the original film, but *Carrie* is different. “This is not a remake,” she insists. “It’s a retelling of the book. We looked at the book and said, ‘We want to take what Stephen King has written in this beautiful novel and make it come to life. We want to make it something that hasn’t been told this way before, and we want to put our hearts and souls in it; that way it’s our project,’ and that’s the way I had to look at *Carrie*.”

“I didn’t look at it thinking, ‘Oh, Sissy Spacek was amazing, she got an Oscar nomination and now I’m going to have to fill her shoes!’ I wanted to make my own Carrie; not something that could be compared, but something that stands alone.”

Moretz has experience of playing troubled teens, so in many ways *Carrie* is in her wheelhouse. “I find the happy-go-lucky characters boring,” she notes, “because I am happy-go-lucky. I have an amazing family and supportive mother, so I don’t have to portray that, because I have it. The point ➤

The pig’s blood scene proved to be one of the trickiest to get right.





BIG MOVIE

Carrie



➤ of acting is to become someone you're not; not just living who you are or going into a character that has a mother who puts her down and tells her she's never going to be something. All that hate is coming towards her, and Carrie is an introverted character, while I'm very extroverted and can talk to anybody. But playing someone who doesn't know how to look somebody in the eye without feeling weird; that's the kind of thing I like to do. If I'm playing myself it's just not fun."



"Again, there are very few actresses in her range in terms of what she's able to do in the breadth of roles that she has played. She's a four-time Oscar nominee, so she really was the anchor for the movie, and set a standard for everybody. It was a real blessing to have Julianne. Not only was it a validation of the material, but we had an even better chance of it being something special and taken seriously with her in it. So that was the watershed moment of casting, for sure."

"We had to find a reality in her," adds Peirce, "so we kept going back to the King book. With every passage I wrote, I would say, 'Who is this woman and what is the reality of her background?' King doesn't spell it all out, but she had been religious and broke it off and created her own religion, but what does one do in their religion? I also wanted the relationship with her daughter

“WE ALSO DID A FEW THINGS YOU WON'T SEE IN THE DE PALMA FILM. I DON'T WANT TO GIVE ANYTHING AWAY, BUT IT'S PRETTY OVER THE TOP”

JORDAN SAMUEL

to be real, so those were the things we went through in figuring out how to ground her character. And then Julianne brought that wonderful performance to it, so her lens on everything was really fantastic."

As it turned out, the De Palma movie was hugely influential on Moore as an adolescent, who after talking to Peirce was intrigued by the possibilities of a remake. "I think the key for me was the isolation," offers the actress on her character, "and her psychosis!" she adds with a laugh. "I think this is definitely someone who has had several psychotic breaks, and all the damage she was inflicting on this child, I wanted to understand that she was doing it in the guise of parenting. She is someone who cannot live in the outside world and has rejected it, and it has rejected her, so she doesn't want her daughter out there either. She only sees danger out there for Carrie, not a place where she can live with other people. So I really looked at the book and tried to figure out a rationale for literally everything she was doing in that relationship. I wanted to make it all psychologically understandable."

One iconic scene that features heavily in the book and film is the climactic moment in which Carrie becomes prom queen, only to have a bucket of pig's blood dumped on

PROM FRIGHT

How to make it out of alive from horror's bloodiest school socials



X DON'T PRANK THE LOSER GIRL (CARRIE)

She's never done anything to hurt anyone; she just wants to have a nice time. If you dump a bucket of pig blood on her, she might just freak out and murder the entire school using her telekinetic powers.



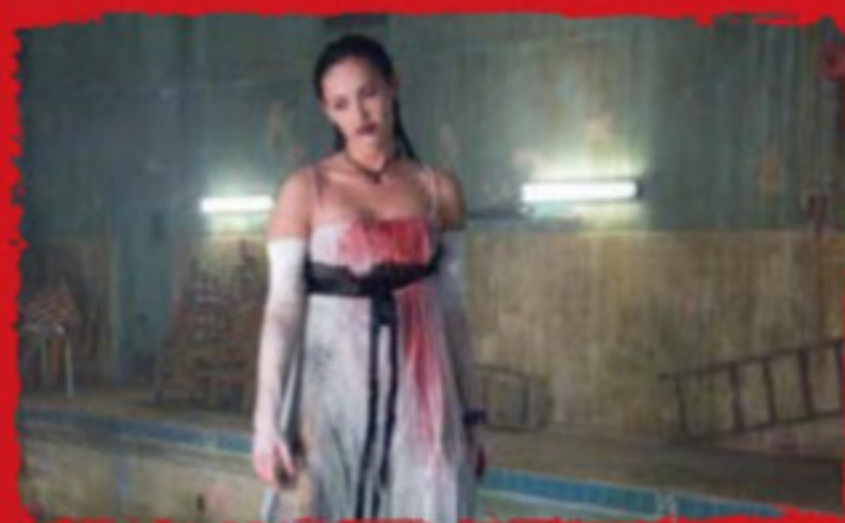
X KNOW WHO YOU'RE TAKING (THE LOVED ONES)

If your prom date seems a bit twitchy, there's a good chance that she's just a little shy. There's also the possibility that she wants to drill a hole into your skull and turn you into a living doll.



X DON'T DRINK THE PUNCH (CABIN FEVER 2)

This is a basic hygiene issue; you don't know how many people you're sharing germs with. If those germs are a flesh eating virus then you've got a problem. Best to stay out of the pool, too.



X DON'T DITCH YOUR GIRLFRIEND FOR THE HOT GIRL (JENNIFER'S BODY)

If you go to the prom with your long-term girlfriend's beautiful best friend, you can't complain when she turns out to be a flesh-eating demon and you die in a pool.



X MAKE SURE THE SLAYER ATTENDS (BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER)

If your school is situated on a hellmouth, then it's vital to make sure your generation's Slayer is going to show up and take care of any vampire hordes that might crash the party.



X KNOW YOUR TIME TRAVEL RULES (DETENTION)

Missing prom night due to detention? Well, the fate of the world is in your hands, Clapton Davis. Use the time-travelling stuffed bear and save us all from Cinderhella.



X DON'T BE FRIENDS WITH JAMIE LEE CURTIS (PROM NIGHT)

Just don't do it. We're sure that she's a lovely person, but if anyone's making it out alive it's her, and nobody else. Improve your odds of survival and just steer well clear.

CARRIE

Prom Scream



In Moretz and Moore, it's hard to envisage better casting choices.



Producer Kevin Misher was quick to emphasise *Carrie's* R rating.



her head by the spiteful Chris. As that scene pretty much provides the catalyst for the carnage that ensues, it obviously features heavily in the new film as well. "I think we did a couple of takes each day," remembers Dale, "because it was definitely a big reset for Chloë and Ansel [Elgort], who plays Tommy, so that was an issue for sure. We had to do a lot of testing for the umbrella effect when the blood hits her, so fortunately we didn't have to do it too many times. We tested it on Chloë's stunt girl Alex in the special effects shop on and off for weeks, having blood, sugar water or whatever it was poured on her head."

Drenching the film's lead in blood was just part of the challenge; the other was trying to maintain post-bucket continuity for the rest of the film. "In order to streamline that issue," explains make-up department head Jordan Samuel, "I did some Photoshop versions for Kim's approval and then made a 3D version on a white resin cast of Chloë's head that we could look at or walk around until we got the right balance we were looking for. Instead of making it look like a random thing, we decided to work backwards from a specific design that looked like it came from the actual incident. Once Kim signed off on the actual splatter pattern she wanted, I had the head photographed and tattoo transfers made for the head where the blood was going to be."

Although the actual number of blood-drenching takes was kept to a minimum, it was a demanding process for those involved. "I think it's safe to say it was the same process the make-up department went through, because we were covered in blood!" jokes Samuel. "Chloë was a trooper and didn't complain, but it did get to a point after the ninth or tenth time when it was really becoming arduous. But we soldiered on, and

it was a great bonding experience, going through all of that together."

And for anyone who wonders just how violent *Carrie's* path of vengeance will be in the new version, Misher is quick to point out the film's R rating. "That's very important, because we probably couldn't do justice to the book in a PG-13 universe. I wouldn't say there is anything gratuitously violent."

"The bucket fall at the prom is still the turning point of the movie," adds Samuel, "but we also did a few things you won't see in the De Palma film. In that version, Sissy turns around in the road and causes John Travolta's car to spin and blow up, but that doesn't happen in our movie. In this version she plays cat and mouse with them for a while, and it's quite gory. I don't want to give anything away, but it's pretty over the top."

So what should we expect from the new *Carrie*? "It's a character piece," claims Misher, "about a young girl's coming of age, so as she discovers her powers, we discover her powers. The book suggests some elements of the chaos that are a little bigger than the original movie, so while we went along with some of that, we don't exercise wild abandon just because we could. It had to be appropriate for the movie."

"The themes everybody loved from the book and the first movie, about mothers, daughters, bullying and how adolescents treat each other, those are all universal," adds Dale. "This is a great contemporary retelling that holds on to those themes and continues to explore them, because they are always relevant. If you watch the first movie it's still good, but it feels kind of dated. With this movie, we felt it was a great story that was ready for retelling, with great actors, a great update and classic story. If you've got a great story, it's not hard to put it in new clothing, so that's what we've done."

Carrie is in cinemas 29 November.

GRIMM & BARE IT

WORDS JODIE TYLEY INTERVIEWS STEVE NASH

BEWARE – THERE ARE MERMAIDS, ALLIGATORS AND A NEWLY ZOMBIFIED NICK BURKHARDT WHEN GRIMM RETURNS. THE CAST AND CO-CREATOR DAVID GREENWALT LIFT THE LID ON SEASON THREE...

AS THE MYTHOLOGY OF GRIMM GROWS, ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE TRADITIONS IS FAST BECOMING THE SEASON FINALE COMA SCENE. IN THE FIRST YEAR IT WAS MAIN SQUEEZE JULIETTE SILVERTON (BITSIE TULLOCH) WHO slipped unconscious after a nasty supernatural scratch and spent the following season struggling with amnesia. Now it's the turn of main star – detective turned demon-hunter Nick Burkhardt (David Giuntoli) – to go catatonic and deal with the consequences.

At the climax of Season Two he walked straight into a trap and was hit with a gob full of green spit. The goo was straight from the notorious 'ruler of death' Baron Samedi (Reg E Cathey), and it transforms the victim into a zombie, like the flesh-hungry mob surrounding Nick's pals Rosalee (Bree Turner), Monroe (Silas Weir Mitchell) and Juliette in the dramatic cliffhanger.

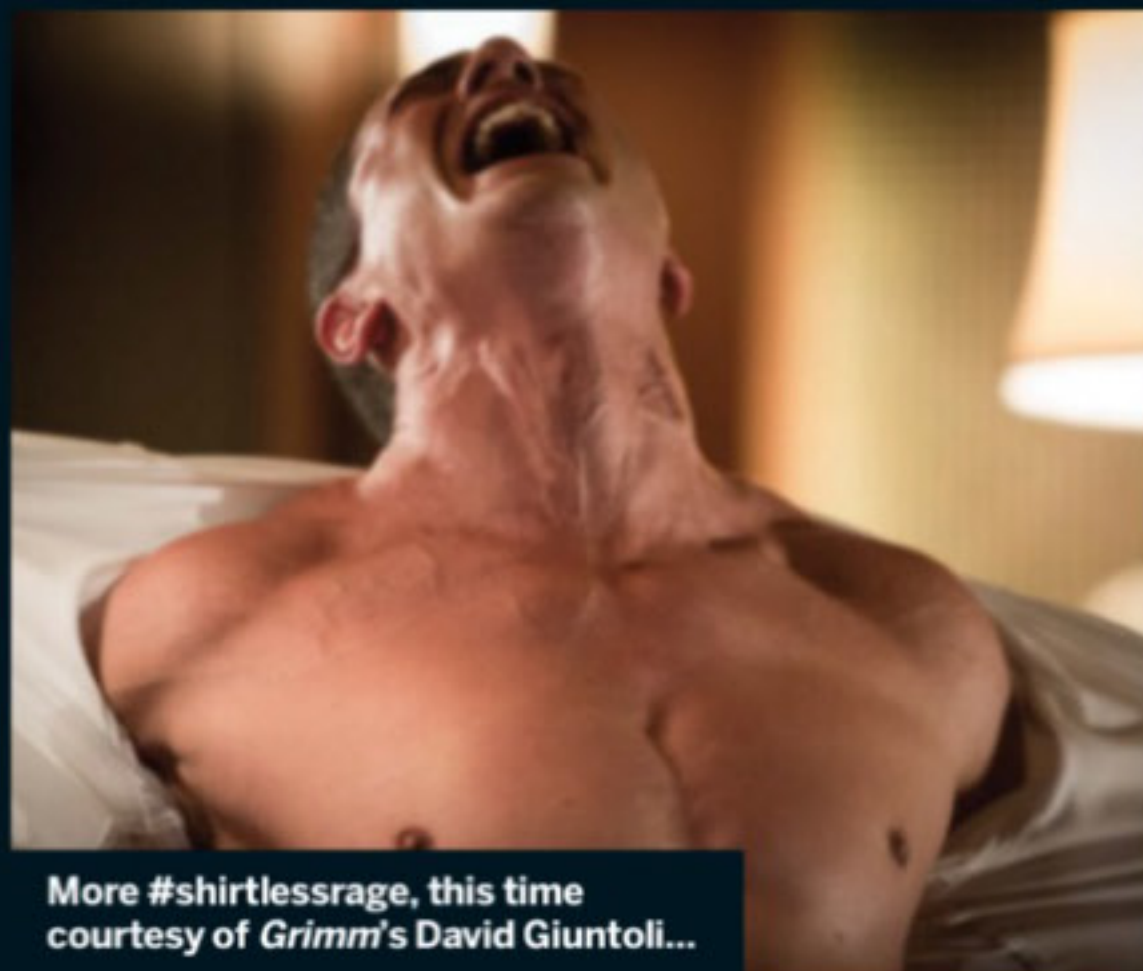
"Season Three picks up right where Season Two ended," says David Giuntoli. "And I'm not in the first episode very much. Everyone is either looking for Nick or dealing with me. I do eventually wake up, I can't say where or in what country, but I start wreaking absolute havoc, wherever I land." In the show's closing moments, he was locked in a coffin and heading for Europe to do the Royals' bidding. Excitingly, the writers are going to make good on their promise and allow Nick to become a monster for a while. "It's almost like I am a guest star on another show right now as some zombie guy," he reveals. "His Grimm powers can be used for evil. There's going to be a lot of fighting in the first episode back, and it's very nice to get to be angry."

Grimm's co-creator David Greenwalt adds that there won't be an easy fix: "He doesn't know who his friends are, so everybody is an enemy to him," he says. "You don't know where Nick is going to end up, but he is definitely going to have some problems if and when his feet hit the ground again." It's yet another obstacle for the Grimm and his girl, since Juliette had only recently snapped out of her spellbound lust for Captain Renard (Sasha Roiz) and discovered – and quickly accepted – the nature of Nick's night job. Now that his Wesen friends and partner on the police force, Hank Griffin (Russell Hornsby) are all party to his secret. Giuntoli says this is only going to make his character stronger: "He's like, 'OK, I'm out of the

closet,' and people seem to be accepting him, so I think the show can move to more of a group dynamic. He's in a happier place now. He's forming the Grimm Avengers! He has definitely gone through a process of collecting more and more people on his side, creating his own family." It's a monster-fighting squad reminiscent of the Scooby Gang, which is no surprise since Greenwalt and co-creator Jim Kouf both worked on *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*.

Part of *Grimm*'s charm is the refreshingly easy-to-follow setup. Unlike most genre shows on the box, it isn't densely serialised and impenetrable for newbies. The showrunners prefer to discuss 'themes' rather than 'arcs', and Kouf teases some of the issues plaguing the show's third year. "There are several themes this season: Nick and Juliette, Monroe and Rosalee, the Captain and his brother, and Adalind, so there are a lot of balls in the air. Everybody is going to move forward, but one of the themes could definitely be 'motherhood'. One of the themes for Nick could be, 'If I have done a really terrible thing, how do I go on with my life?'"

Speaking of motherhood, Nick's own mummy dearest could be returning after grabbing the Coins of Zakynthos and apparently leaving town. "You may see more of Nick's mum," teases Greenwalt. "You may see part of Nick's mum. And we will meet another Grimm." This last piece of information is a bit of a bombshell, as Grimms have had a Chosen One vibe so far where Nick seems to be the sole protector of humanity ➤



More #shirtlessrage, this time courtesy of *Grimm*'s David Giuntoli...

“HIS GRIMM POWERS CAN
BE USED FOR EVIL... IT'S
NICE TO GET ANGRY”
DAVID GIUNTOLI



MUST-SEE TV

Grimm

SHOWREEL

David Greenwalt and Jim Kouf's five best Angel episodes



FIVE BY FIVE

Season One, Episode 18

Writer: Jim Kouf

1 This was much more than just a crossover episode, as tormented Slayer Faith deals with the consequences of her actions (namely swapping bodies with Buffy and sleeping with her boyfriend). She has a death wish, but Angel sees straight through her plans and decides to help her.



DEAR BOY

Season Two, Episode Five

Writer/Director:

David Greenwalt

2 Greenwalt was often entrusted to write the episodes that introduced story arcs such as the Shanshu plotline and, in this episode, the return of Darla. Angel also does karaoke, this time with a rousing rendition of *Everybody Have Fun Tonight*.

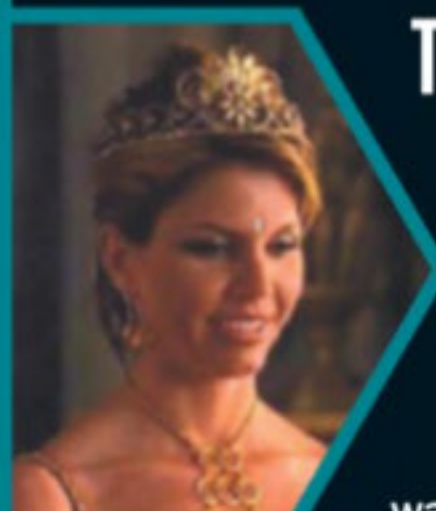


THE THIN DEAD LINE

Season Two, Episode 14

Writers: Jim Kouf, Shawn Ryan)

3 After Angel fires Wesley, Cordelia and Gunn, the trio wind up fighting zombie policemen with a bunch of teenagers. They don't fare so well as Wes ends up getting shot, but the events of this episode snap our fanged hero out of his self-imposed solitude.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE PLRTZ GLRB

Season Two, Episode 22

Writer/Director:

David Greenwalt

4 We loved seeing Cordelia as a princess – until it was revealed to be a conspiracy to kill her after he 'com-shuk' with Groosalugg. This instalment ends on a spectacular cliffhanger – the sudden appearance of Willow and Angel's line, "It's Buffy."



TOMORROW

Season Three, Episode 22

Writer/Director:

David Greenwalt

5 Everything goes to hell in this season finale, as Angel's son Connor takes revenge and sends his father to the bottom of the ocean in a metal coffin, showing that Greenwalt has a history of leaving his heroes in dire situations.



With Nick indisposed, what does this mean for partner Hank?



As the show progresses, things seem to be getting stranger and stranger...



With whole swathes of mythology to draw on, expect to see all-new Wesen.

➤ (in Portland, Oregon, at least). Giuntoli adds that the mythology surrounding these ancient hunters will develop: "You will learn more about the Grimm history this season, and you will meet another Grimm at some point," he confirms. "And it's going to be an unlikely person."

There's also the complicated matter of mother-to-be Adalind Schade (Claire Coffee), who's continuing her mission to regain her Hexenbiest powers by using her unborn, half-Royal child as a bargaining chip. "There are all sorts of possibilities with Adalind's pregnancy," says Greenwalt. "And there will be some terrible consequences." One of the potential fathers, Sean Renard, will be joining her overseas, taking a long overdue trip across the Atlantic to deal with his estranged family face-to-face. And the family is only going to grow, as we meet his 'cunning first cousin' Viktor Beckendorf, played by *Angel* alumnus Alexis Denisof. As the search for the key heats up among the treasure-hungry Royals, there's bound to be more #shirtlessrage. At San Diego Comic-Con, actor Sasha Roiz admitted that the fan reaction to *those* scenes took him by surprise, adding that he revelled in the mystery surrounding his character's motives and loyalty. "I like the slow reveal and to keep the audience

guessing. Everything has been slowly unveiled, except for my shirt."

If Renard doesn't form an alliance with his brother Eric, he could be the one to intercept Nick and ship him back to Portland so his friends can administer the antidote. It's safe to assume that his relationship will get back on track once he's back to normal, says Giuntoli: "Nick and Juliette are looking to be back together this season, but I am sure they are going to throw a major problem in there," he says. "Nick and Juliette just need some quiet, alone time together, where we just hang out, order food, look in to each other's eyes and watch some TV!" But the actor knows better. There's only room for one doe-eyed couple on *Grimm*, and that spot is bagged by Monroe and Rosalee, who are looking to tie the knot this season. "I don't think Nick and Juliette will have a 'happily ever after' ending. No way. This is *Grimm*. She will behead me or something in Season Five." It would certainly be a finale to rival the coma cliffhanger. To be continued... ☹

Grimm Season Three will air on NBC on 25 October in the US and early in 2014 on Watch in the UK. Season Two is available on DVD and Blu-ray now.



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"I TALKED TO JJ ABRAMS
ABOUT IT FOR THREE
HOURS, AND IT WENT
FROM THERE RIGHT INTO
PRODUCTION"

JH WYMAN

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GOOD COP,

DREDD MEETS FRINGE IN JJ ABRAMS' NEW SHOW ALMOST HUMAN

ROBO COP

FRINGE LEFT SOME PRETTY BIG SHOES TO FILL, BUT FORMER SHOWRUNNER JH WYMAN HAS THE ANSWER. HE'S ENLISTING THE COMBAT BOOTS OF **SCI-FI'S ULTIMATE LAWMAN**, SADDLING HIM WITH A ROBOT PARTNER AND BRINGING JUSTICE TO THE MEAN STREETS OF 2048 IN ALMOST HUMAN. **WE SPEAK TO THE CREATORS AND STARS** TO DISCOVER WHY THIS SCI-FI COP SHOW ISN'T QUITE FRINGE, AND JOHN KENNEX IS NO JOSEPH DREDD...

WORDS
EDWARD GROSS

MORE UNRELENTING AND MECHANICAL THAN ANY MACHINE, DREDD MAY NOT BE BACK ON THE MEAN-STREETS OF CRIME-DRENCHED FUTURE METROPOLIS, but Karl Urban – the man behind the visor – most definitely is. Instead of an unbending obedience to the often dehumanising letter of law comes the struggle to retain humanity in an ever-evolving technological world.

Set in 2048, *Almost Human* – the brainchild of *Fringe* executive producer JH Wyman – postulates human police officers working alongside robotic counterparts in order to maintain order on the streets. John Kennex (Urban) is a human cop who survived one of the deadliest attacks ever made against the police department, resulting in a 17-month coma, partial memory loss, the death of his partner and having a robotic leg fitted in place of the one he lost. Heading back to work, Kennex, like every other cop, must work with a robot partner, eventually settling on the 'flawed' model named Dorian (Michael Ealy). While

Dorian's emotional range is out of sorts for a robot, Kennex's trauma leaves him equally dysfunctional, and the two eventually find a common ground that it's hard to imagine the uncompromising Dredd reaching. If Kennex were to wind up in the Big Meg, he wouldn't be storming through Peach Trees spitting death from his Lawgiver; he'd be shuffled off to the Academy to teach rookies how to buff their eagles.

Wyman, who says he was writing the pilot while directing the series finale of *Fringe*, compares and contrasts the two shows by explaining, "At the heart of *Fringe* it was always a quintessential kidnapping story. It was about family. It was about these disparate people that were trying to hold it together in a strange world. But it also turned out to be a great platform to sort of talk about stories that are very important to the human condition. That's what really got me off, the idea that I could work in metaphor and tell these stories with the people I love at the heart of it. *Almost Human* is not a >>>



MUST-SEE TV

Almost Human

THE LAWMAN

Star Trek and Dredd star
Karl Urban on John Kennex



What made you decide to do television, and what are your thoughts on the show and your character?

I read the script, and I was drawn to the character of John Kennex, a character who's been in a coma for two years, who wakes up to find he has

a completely robotic leg and is responsible for a massive loss of life of his team, and is pushed into the front line of trying to protect and serve humanity. I found that infinitely interesting. A character who is searching for himself and finds answers in the most unlikely source, which is his synthetic partner. He's a character who has an aversion to technology and he's partnered up with a robot who, ironically, is almost more human than human. I found that interesting. Character and story aside, it was an opportunity to work with Joel Wyman, who I'm a huge fan of – I loved *Fringe*. It was a really smart show; it wasn't a stereotypical, dumbed down show. I knew going into it that the stories were going to be smart, and that we would not be talking down to the audience. Then obviously it was my continuing relationship with JJ Abrams, who really drew me to it. I wasn't looking to do television, but once I started looking at all of the elements involved, I thought, "How can I turn this down? This can be really, really cool."

I LOVED FRINGE – IT WAS A REALLY SMART SHOW

KARL URBAN

What do you hope John will learn from Dorian?

My hope is that Dorian kind of puts John in touch with himself, with his humanity. In the best world they learn from each other, because in a way they're both searching for what it is to be human. John does not remember vast tracks of his life; he is a character who has a lot of pain, bitterness, anger, guilt, frustration, torment – all of this baggage that he has. I think consequently he's quite closed off, and Dorian is a wonderful mechanism for opening him up a bit – for softening him up over time.

During a movie, you know the whole story going into it. What do you think about doing a TV show where you don't know where things are going?

I think it's exciting. We don't know what's just around the corner. I am certainly aware of the throughline for my character for the first season, and that's enough for me. I just want to concentrate on making the best show that we can and delivering really interesting and compelling characters who are accessible and identifiable, and dealing with stories that we can all relate to and empathise with, showcased against the canvas of this slightly futuristic world. To me, that's interesting; the technology that's in *Almost Human* is down the pike. We're putting stuff into the show that's been fully researched, and this technology is just around the corner. I don't think of this show as science fiction; it's a slightly futuristic show. It's like a cop show in the early Nineties, but the cops are walking around with iPhones.



Genre favourite Karl Urban heads up a strong cast.



Michael Ealy stars as synthetic cop-with-a-conscience Dorian.



FEEDING ALMOST HUMAN

What sci-fi additives and sugary influences makes it into *Almost Human*?



30% ALIEN NATION (1988)



Rockne S O'Bannon's buddy cop sci-fi movie paired up an alien and human cop. The prejudice toward synthetics in *Almost Human*, as well as Kennex's journey to understand his partner, certainly has parallels.

5% FRINGE (2008-2013)



It'll be interesting how much of the world-building in *Fringe*'s final season influenced Wyman's new show. If nothing, it'll at least have cops flashing badges and lens flare.

20% ROBOCOP (1987)



Alex Murphy gets gunned down in the line of duty and reawakens with a robot body and minus his family. In *Almost Human*, Kennex reawakens with a robot leg, also having lost his family.

3% DREDD (2011)



Karl Urban plays hard-ass lawmen of the future in both *Almost Human* and *Dredd*, which seems to be about as close as the two get. But for lack of a *Dredd 2*, we'll pretend this is it.

22% BLADE RUNNER (1982)



Deckard hunts robots and thinks he knows what it is to be human. Aside from the big themes, *Almost Human*'s title echoes Tyrell Corp's 'More human than human' motto.

8% I, ROBOT (2004)



While there's obvious links to Will Smith's robophobic detective, Isaac Asimov's collection of short stories chews on numerous themes, musing how humanity might not measure up to the standard it sets for its creations.

12% SURROGATES (2009)



Showing FBI agent Tom Greer, recovering from the death of his son and managing a deteriorating relationship with his wife, this clearly deals with the sense of alienation that inspired *Almost Human*.

ALMOST HUMAN

Good Cop, Robo Cop



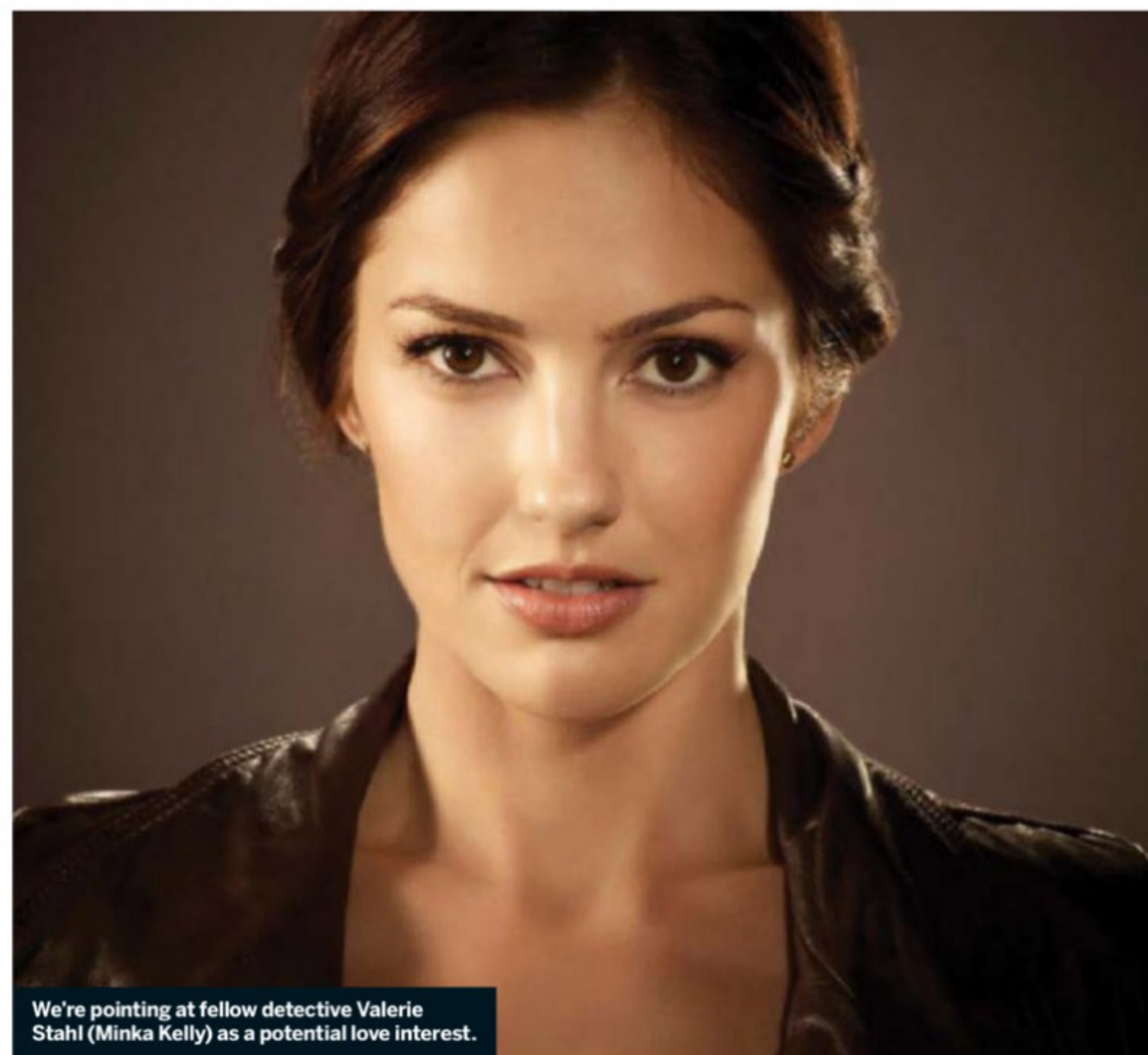
➤ quintessential kidnap story, but there is definitely a mythology. At the end of the day, it's about these incredibly brave people that are on the front lines of this world that has really changed – but at the same time is not that far away. What I love about it is that again, I get to tell stories that are metaphors about the human condition; cautionary tales and really thoughtful episodes that hopefully have some poetry in them and feel like they're more than just about a bad guy getting caught."

Executive producer Naren Shankar, whose cop-show credits include *CSI* and, more recently, *Grimm*, muses, "We keep finding ourselves going up against the notion of how technology does unequal things depending on where you are on the socioeconomic scale. It enables people with a lot to have more and more, but at the same time it's leaving an entire group of people behind. Without hitting it too hard on the head, we're trying to reflect those elements in the stories we tell, because it's fascinating and generates stories about crime, inequality and a whole plethora of really interesting things that we can explore within the context of an action-driven cop drama."

The genesis of *Almost Human* actually lies with a debate between Wyman and his 21-year-old daughter. While her preferred method of communication is texting, his remains actual conversation in which you can still get a fuller sense of what a person is feeling or trying to convey rather than

words appearing on a screen. "The whole thing started to bother me," he says, "and I thought, 'Right now, the technology is sort of making us kind of closer to the people who are furthest away from us, but furthest away from the people who are closest to us.' It's a problem. I'm definitely a fan of technology – the things we've managed to achieve technologically is astounding, but I can see that there's another side. So when I thought about a show in the future that's not too far away, that would allow me to say these cool things about what it's like to be human in this day and age through a great story, it became clear that that was my next step. I was going to take a little break from television and do new films, but it was such a live idea that when I talked to [executive producer] JJ Abrams about it, he flipped, too. I think we had a three-hour conversation about it, and it went from there right into production."

Much like the scowling veteran Dredd and his emotionally fragile rookie Anderson, Kennex and Dorian's mutual antagonism softens by the end of the pilot, but that doesn't mean it's the end of the arc. As Wyman explains it, one of the touchstone relationships from a film that seems to have been inspirational in this case is the one between Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin in *Midnight Run*, about a bounty hunter out to capture a criminal and use the bounty to get out of the business and fulfil his dream of opening a coffee shop. "De Niro played a guy who had done everything right in life, ➤



We're pointing at fellow detective Valerie Stahl (Minka Kelly) as a potential love interest.



MUST-SEE TV

Almost Human



Shades of the likes of *Dredd*, *RoboCop* and *Blade Runner* are immediately evident.



Kennex soon clashes with detective Richard Paul, played by Michael Irby.

➤ yet had the rug pulled out from under him,” Wyman reflects. “Literally everybody he trusted and loved abandoned him, and he developed an incredible chip on his shoulder because of that. Then here comes Charles Grodin, who represents, to De Niro, the negative side of the equation. He’s a guy who doesn’t follow the rules, who works for a gangster; he stole, he jumped bail. So De Niro is going to put this guy behind bars and collect the money. But the complications start to come. You realise that De Niro is playing a tough guy on the exterior, but is actually a damaged romantic. He loved his wife, and he’s destroyed by what’s happened in his personal life. Then you start to reveal that Grodin is actually somebody who stole from the gangster to give to charity.

“Nothing is black and white, and this is kind of what’s going on with John and Dorian. They both have such specific views of the world, Dorian of course absorbing so much and having opinions and John having his own opinions. The relationship is very real in that regard. Sometimes it’s going to go well, while sometimes Dorian pisses him off so badly that John won’t talk to him. John’s a little more easily exasperated with Dorian. It’s not that John hates technology; John really does like technology and appreciates it. Any cop who can get a better gun would, of course, appreciate that. He’s not stupid.

**“FRINGE
TURNED
INTO A
WHOLE
LOT OF
DIFFERENT
THINGS, IT
WASN’T
LIKE BEING
SET IN A
POLICE
PRECINCT”**

JH WYMAN

He’ll use it. When the robot starts to become too human and actually starts to replace humans – the point where technology starts to leave people behind – that’s where John draws the line.”

Adds Shankar, “In *Midnight Run* the relationship takes one step forward, then three quarters of a step back throughout the entire movie. There’s this tiny sort of forward momentum to it, but it’s a gradual build. That’s the kind of thing we’re trying to do here. You’re going to see them working together and developing appreciation for each other, until Dorian pisses John off in a particular direction or asks too many questions that makes him upset or does something a robot would do that a human partner would not do. That hopefully keeps us in a place where there’s still a good amount of fun conflict between the two guys, but also in a realistic way they are working together and moving forward because the natural progression in the show is that ultimately they’ll end up as friends. We’re hoping to do it as a slow burn.”

“It’s a constantly evolving relationship,” notes Wyman. “It’s not going to be ‘One guy’s a little sweet and one guy’s a little grumpy’; it’s a lot more defined than that. What we’re trying to do with this is make sure that people are hopefully invested in these characters’ lives and start



THE PARTNER

FlashForward's Michael Ealy on android Dorian

What brought you to the show and what appealed to you about the character of Dorian?

First and foremost, the pedigree of the producers is there. These guys know how to drive the ship. My first meeting with Joel Wyman was three hours long, and I went from not being sure about this to realising this was just crazy. The fact that he's driving this

ship makes me feel confident that this story is going to go in the right direction. The material – the way it was written – was very interesting to me, because despite the technology and the idea that this guy is a synthetic, there's so many little things that I find interesting and relatable to what it is we're going through now. There's discrimination; there's political correctness: "Don't call me a fucking robot!" You can't say that to him; it's offensive. The idea that a robot, a machine, can be offended, I'm like, "You've got to wrap your head around that for a second." This is not something we're at right now, but because the show is set in the near future, it's right around the corner. People have asked me if I was interested in the future. Not that I didn't care about my future, but I never really thought about the future and where we're going to be. But this show has made me think. My kids are going to be living in a world that can be similar to this; my son could potentially be partnered with a Dorian if he becomes a cop. You don't know. It's one of those things where it provokes so much thought and intrigue, that instantly it's like, "This is the one to sign on to."

I BASED DORIAN ON JASON BOURNE, ROBERT PATRICK'S TERMINATOR AND JEFF BRIDGES' STARMAN
MICHAEL EALY

How hard is it to balance the robot and human parts of his personality?

It is by far the most difficult role to try and play human/machine, machine/human. Which one is he in this scene, which one is he in that scene? Joel and Brad Anderson, our director on the pilot, were very helpful in helping me find those fine lines. I based Dorian on three particular characters in movie history that I've seen: Jason Bourne,

Robert Patrick's Terminator and Jeff Bridges' Starman. That has helped me kind of gauge how far I can go in this particular moment, or how small I can be in this one. It's been incredible. I look forward to where he's going to be in other episodes and the levels I can play with this guy.

In the pilot there looks like there's quite a scope of humour between Dorian and Kennex. Is that going to play out, or do you think it's going to get more serious?

I think the humour plays nicely in the show without being forced. It never feels sitcomy or a setup. Usually, the humour is inadvertent or the irony of the moment, especially from John's perspective.

What do you think the characters will learn from each other?

I'm hoping Dorian's hunger for humanity will cause John to understand that he's blessed and what he has is special. What I hope Dorian understands is that everything human is not good, and sometimes being able to do what you're able to do isn't the most important thing. Because he's programmed to see, say, how many pixels exists in something, it means nothing to him, so he doesn't appreciate it. I hope he learns to appreciate some of that and, I think based on what I've read, that's going to come.

There's a moment in the premiere when Dorian says, "I want to be a cop." For an android to want something, which is something that you would think of as distinctly human, is a new thing. Can you talk about exploring humanity through the eyes of this non-human?

I like to describe him as a reflection of the humanity we all take for granted. There are people in this world who don't understand the preciousness of what it is to have a child, and they walk away or run from that responsibility. That lack of humanity is something Dorian cannot fathom, because he wants it so bad. I like to consider him as very observant, not so much intuitive as he is observant of human behaviour. If he sees you make a sad face, he wants to know, "What does that sadness feel like?" He really wants to try and feel it, and ultimately where he's going to go... well, it remains to be seen. I feel like his humanity, or his desire to embrace humanity, sets him apart from other machines we've seen in the past. It gives a hopeful tone to the show. Often in sci-fi shows you see that man and machine don't coexist. I think what we're trying to say is that these two hopefully can co-exist and create a model for the masses of society so they understand that man and machine can work together.



British audiences will recognise *The Office's* Mackenzie Crook as robot technician Rudy.

With Urban on board, *Almost Human* has a lot going for it.



to understand that there will be secrets revealed, there will be things told, they'll come to trust each other, and they'll come to distrust each other. There will be a whole bunch of things happening in their relationship, like a real relationship."

That dynamic will be explored against the backdrop of cases the duo investigate, which the producers point out, will be fairly standalone rather than serialised in the way that *Fringe* was. "*Fringe*," Wyman offers, "started off as 'the pattern' and turned into a whole lot of different things – by design. It wasn't like being set in a police precinct, so every week on *Almost Human* we're going to have a case. One of the criteria we sort of laid out for ourselves is we need to solve a future problem being committed by a future invention, because we want to do stories you can't tell now or that no other cop show can tell."

"Futurism is really part of the world you're going to see," says Shankar. "We really want people to see the present extrapolated down the road where they can say, 'Oh, this is where we're going to end up.'" It's a concept that *Judge Dredd* fans will be no strangers to. While the comics present an exaggerated parody of real-world concerns, the movie instead showed a beaten-down, third-world first world lurking around the corner – and with it all

the horrors an urban sprawl can cook up. No urbane kingpin of crime or Norse god of trickery; just thugs, drug dealers and vicious gangs. "There's no big bad," he echoes. "What this really is, is that the world is the big bad. We have a whole bunch of little bads – that's the way of the world. In our world you've got all sorts of mobs from different countries that present problems to the police force. That's how it is in the future. We want to keep it real and away from big overblown bad guys, and keep a foot in reality."

Shankar continues, "As soon as you get into the master villain, you get into tight serialisation in story and mythology that turns off a certain portion of the audience. What we're trying to do is make it accessible, and the serialisation that you're going to see is really the serialisation of the characters in the show. It's their lives, their relationships and the struggles they're going through."

"I really do believe the characters are what people come back to every week," closes Wyman, "and we're trying to give a glimpse into the lives, and some real participation in the lives, of these very brave people who are standing on the front line, getting up every day, putting on battle armour and fighting evils just around the corner." ☞

Almost Human is airing from 4 November on Fox in the US.

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SEE PAGE 51

A BRIEF HISTORY



FROM THE BEST STORIES
TO THE DEADLIEST
FOES, EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO CELEBRATE 50
INCREIBLE YEARS OF
DOCTOR WHO

The Vault



Much of the incredible *Doctor Who* art and behind-the-scenes images in this feature come courtesy of *The Vault: Treasures*

From *The First 50 Years*. Written by film/TV historian Marcus Hearn, with a foreword from Steven Moffat, *The Vault* is available in hardback from BBC Books, priced at £30.

THE DEFINITIVE ARTICLE

WHAT TO READ, SEE, EXPERIENCE AND ENJOY FROM EACH DOCTOR'S ERA



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BOOK

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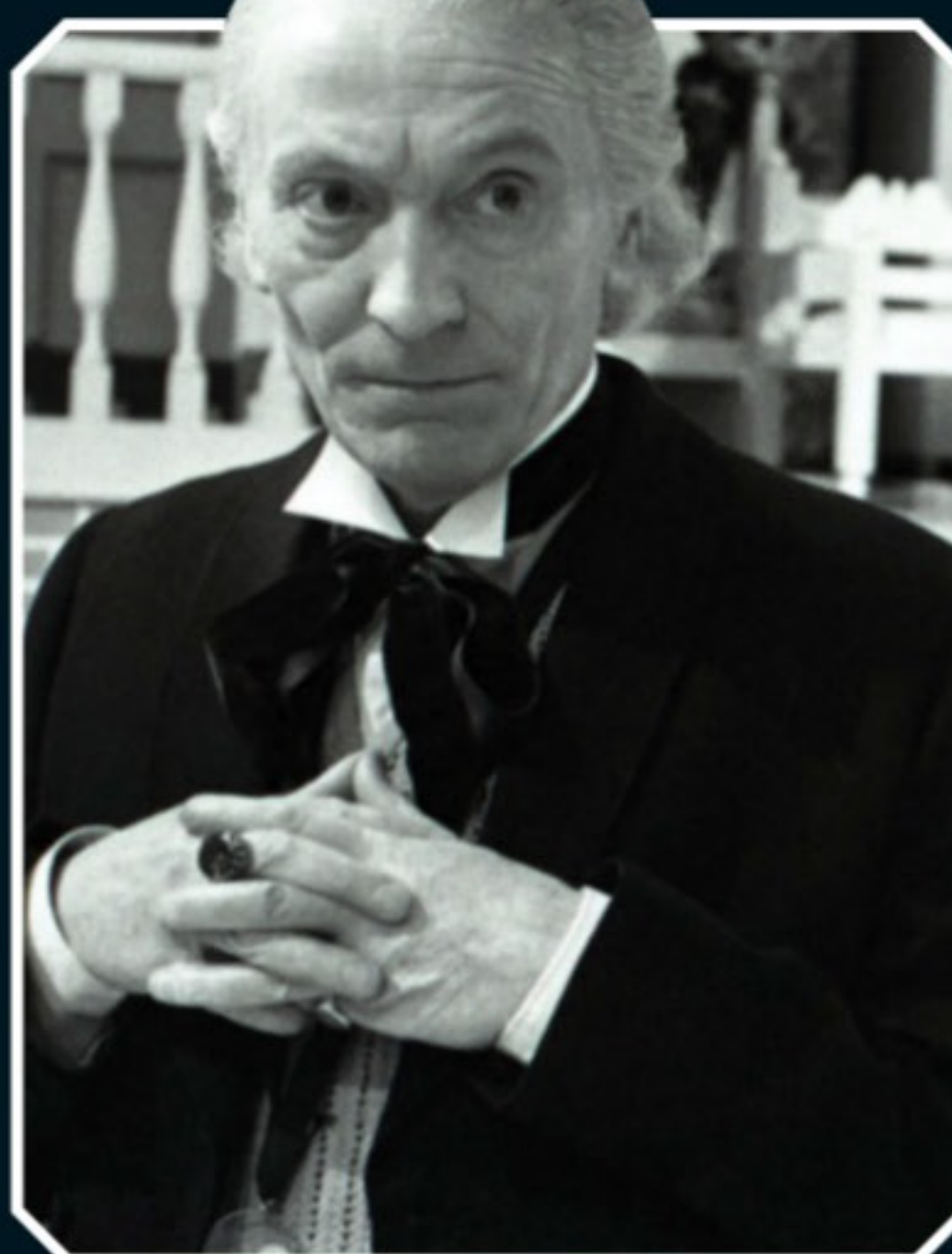
DOCTOR WHO: A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME

All photos © BBC



William Hartnell 1963-66

Companions: Susan Foreman, Ian Chesterton, Barbara Wright, Vicki, Steven Taylor, Katarina, Sara Kingdom, Dodo Chaplet, Polly, Ben Jackson



The Doctor has come a long way. When we first meet him in 'An Unearthly Child', we get the distinct impression that he doesn't want company. As concerned teachers, Ian (William Russell) and Barbara (Jacqueline Hill) follow student Susan (Carole Ann Ford) to a junkyard containing the TARDIS. William Hartnell's First Doctor is introduced as a crotchety grandfather who can't think of anything worse than having these strangers tag along.

Hartnell's belligerence and impatience would never be matched by subsequent Doctors (although Tom Baker came close the more he had to deal with Adric and K-9). This Doctor doesn't need to be an empathetic bleeding heart or swashbuckling action hero; he had companions to carry that weight for him.

That said, part of the joy of watching Hartnell is seeing him warm up as the series progresses. At first his affection is reserved for his granddaughter Susan, but soon he comes to appreciate having someone to travel with and look after, and no longer seems quite so capable of locking his companions out of the TARDIS. Even by the time stories like 'The Aztecs' came around, that twinkle in his eye was becoming increasingly obvious.

The First Doctor is the short-tempered headmaster, unpredictable elderly relative and mad old man with the time machine. Every performance in the role can be traced back to him. To paraphrase Tom Baker's Doctor, he is the definitive article. "It all started out as a mild curiosity in the junkyard, and now it's turned out to be quite a great spirit of adventure."

"HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE WANDERERS IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION? HAVE YOU? TO BE EXILES?"



An Unearthly Child

Hartnell's tenure included some of the best episodes, but we've gone for the first; a beautifully atmospheric introduction to the Time Lord. Pick it up as part of *The Beginning* DVD boxset for £9.



Susan, Ian and Barbara

Ian acts as the upright action hero, while Barbara is the voice of moral reason. Susan, the precocious granddaughter, became increasingly underwritten, but the group soon comes together as a family unit.



Dalek

The iconic villains were seen in the 1963 episode 'The Daleks', as the Doctor finds himself in the middle of their attack on the Thals. Pick it up on the *The Monsters Collection: The Daleks* DVD for £7.



The Witch Hunters by Steve Lyons

The Doctor finds himself in the middle of the Salem Witch Trials, with the knowledge that he can't interfere. It can be picked up for £3.54 used from Amazon.



The Companion Chronicles: Sara Kingdom



Sara Kingdom's adventures make up three different audiobooks, but it's hard to choose one. Start with *The Drowned World* from Big Finish for £8.99 on CD, or £7.99 as a digital download.



ULTIMATE CELEBRATION

Doctor Who

2nd



Tomb Of The Cybermen

The Doctor, Jamie and Victoria stumble upon an expedition to explore the tomb of the

long-dead Cybermen. This isn't just the most frightening Cybermen adventure; it's one of *Doctor Who*'s very best stories. 'Tomb Of The Cybermen' comes as part of the *Revisitations 3* DVD boxset. Pick it up for £13.48.



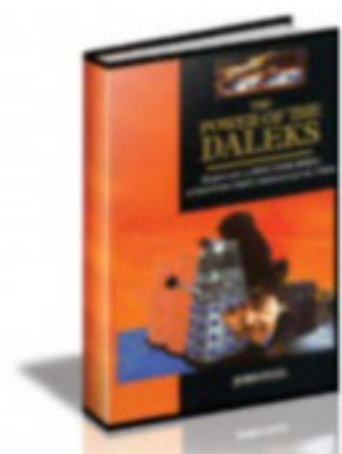
Jamie McCrimmon

Frazer Hines' plucky Highlander saw Troughton's Doctor right through to the end of his run, and was the perfect swashbuckling foil to the nervy, easily agitated Doctor. The two actors created a perfect double act, adding moments of humour and a real bond between the Doctor and his companion that was a first for the show.



Yeti

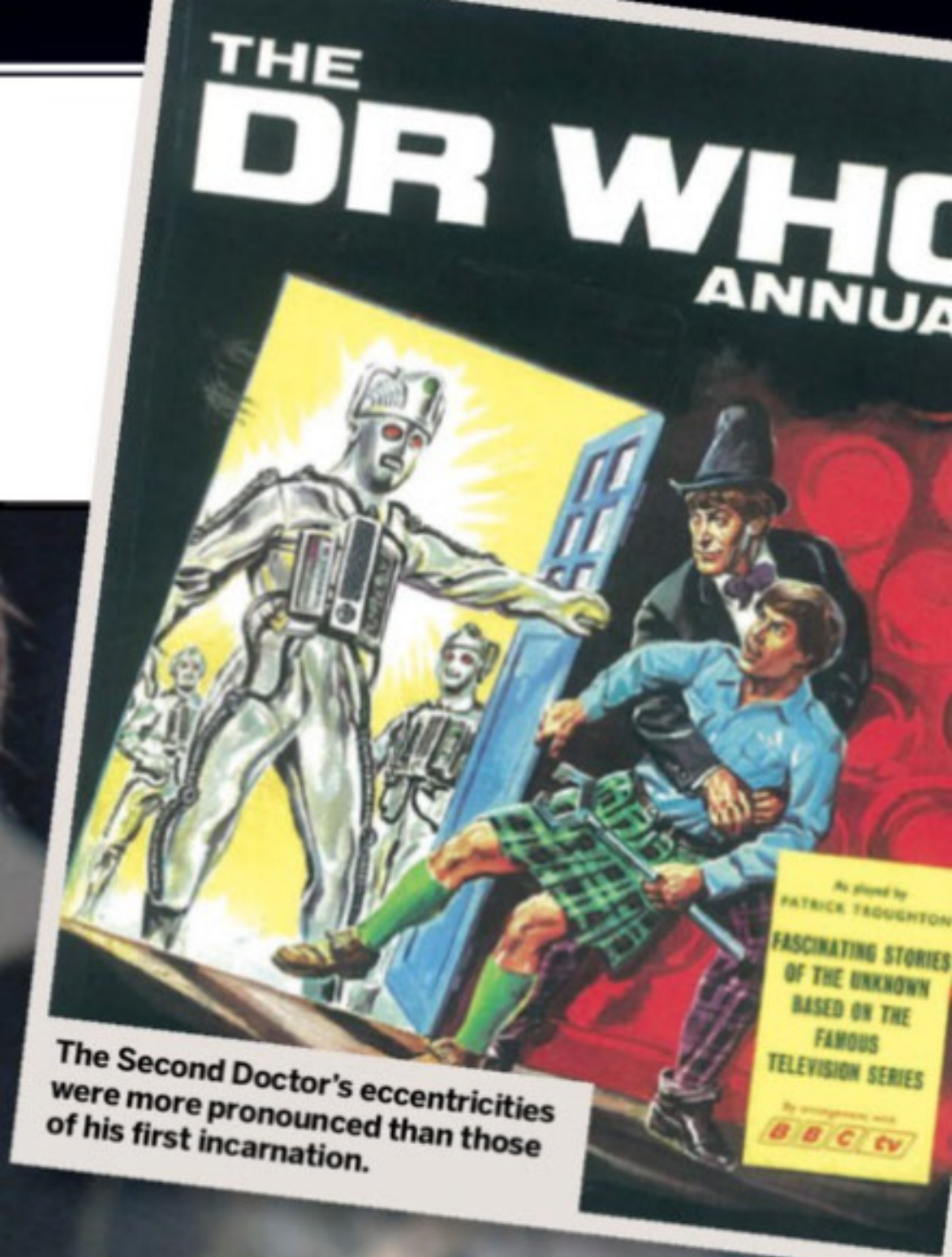
Though most of the Yeti's appearances are missing, the monster is symbolic of many of the creatures faced by the Second Doctor; a snowbound menace that is all the more dangerous for being out of its element. The surviving episodes of 'The Abominable Snowmen' and 'The Web Of Fear' story arcs are collected in *Lost In Time* on DVD for £10.73.



The Power Of The Daleks by John Peel

The sad fact is that the Target novelisations are the only way to

experience several of Troughton's stories. We particularly recommend this unusually detailed and expansive adaptation of Patrick Troughton's first full story. Highly sought after, it can be found used for £12.44 on Amazon.



The Second Doctor's eccentricities were more pronounced than those of his first incarnation.

Patrick Troughton 1966-69

Companions: Polly, Ben Jackson, Jamie McCrimmon, Victoria Waterfield, Zoe Heriot

Patrick Troughton's cosmic hobo stands in sharp contrast to William Hartnell's authoritarian professor. His air of intellectual superiority is ingeniously mismatched with his glorious scruffiness and the impression that he's making it all up as he goes along. The Second Doctor is still prone to losing his temper, but Troughton's brief fits of agita are like watching an aunt struggling to take care of her nieces and nephews, unable to comprehend why they would commit such wanton acts of foolishness.

Although this Doctor's eccentricities were more pronounced (funny hats, a recorder, coats that were bigger than him), it's a wonderfully layered performance

that ensures that the core elements (and some steeliness, when required) that Hartnell brought to the character are not altogether lost. The First Doctor had the air of a man who knew better than everyone else; the Second Doctor slips under his enemies' radar like a Time Lord Columbo. There's no way this absent-minded clown could be capable of scuppering their plans, and yet Troughton could turn on that Time Lord brilliance in an instant, his comic timing

is absolutely superb (best seen in his appearances with Jon Pertwee in the anniversary specials), and he had a big heart underneath that scowl.

Tragically, Troughton's Doctor is the one who has suffered the most from the BBC's policy of wiping tapes. Rumours persist that the lost episodes survive in some form – perhaps because we all want it to be true. Funny and easily flustered, brilliant and big-hearted, there's simply not enough of the Second Doctor.

"OUR LIVES ARE DIFFERENT TO ANYBODY ELSE'S. THAT'S THE EXCITING THING, THAT NOBODY IN THE UNIVERSE CAN DO WHAT WE'RE DOING"

FAITHFUL COMPANION

How Jamie became the Doctor's longest-serving partner

The Second Doctor		5 November 1966 ('The Power Of The Daleks') - 21 June 1969 ('The War Games')
Jamie		17 December 1966 ('The Highlanders') - 21 June 1969 ('The War Games')
Victoria		20 May 1967 ('The Evil Of The Daleks') - 20 April 1968 ('Fury From The Deep')
Zoe		27 April 1968 ('The Wheel In Space') - 21 June 1969 ('The War Games')
Polly	25 June 1966 ('The War Machines') - 13 May 1967 ('The Faceless Ones')	
Ben	25 June 1966 ('The War Machines') - 13 May 1967 ('The Faceless Ones')	

Jon Pertwee 1970-74**Companions:** Liz Shaw, Jo Grant, Sarah Jane Smith

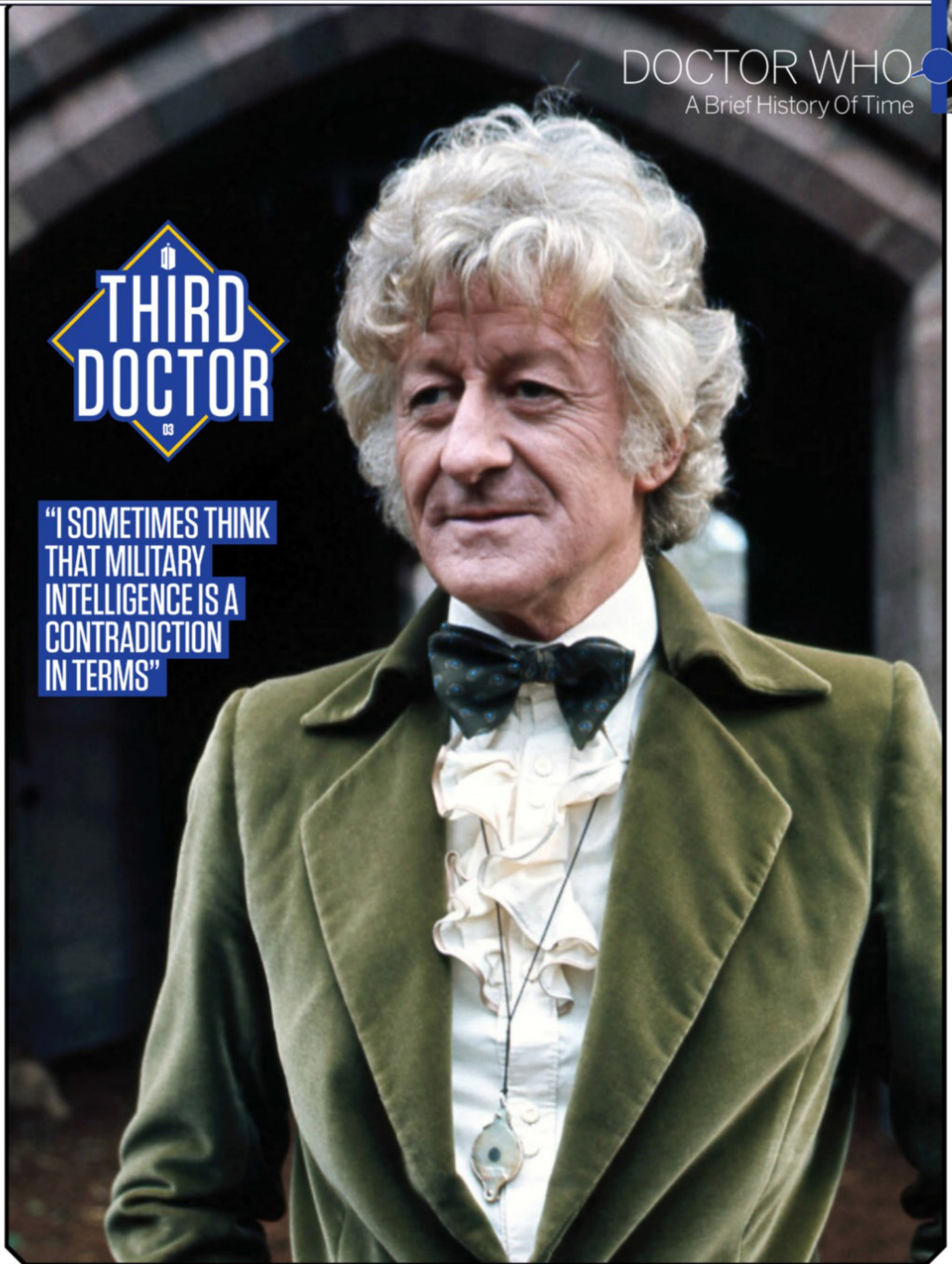
From cosmic hobo to Earth-bound dandy, Jon Pertwee's Doctor reintroduced the air of authoritarianism without losing the mischievous sense of humour. While the Second Doctor could shuffle in without anyone noticing, the Third Doctor always makes his presence felt. Clad in a frilly shirt, velvet suit and cape, Pertwee's Doctor knows he is the most important person in the room, and wants to make sure everyone else does too. With the actor's natural gift for a barbed aside and his interest in giving the role a bit of action hero business, the Doctor had become something of a show-off, which made him tremendous fun to watch.

Pertwee's arrival in the role coincided with the decision to remove the Doctor's ability to travel in time and space. Instead, he would become a protector of Earth, helping the Brigadier (Nicholas Courtney) to fend off alien interference and the machinations of the Master (Roger Delgado). With increasingly environmentally conscious storylines, the Doctor was allowed to become our planet's saviour, acting as the conscience that the British military should always aspire to be.

His righteous indignation was balanced by his desperation for mankind to do the right thing. It was as if, by being forced to stay on Earth, the Doctor was confronted by what humanity was doing to its home and understood that he had to make us see it too. With three wonderful companions in Jo Grant (Katy Manning), Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen) and the perennially underrated Liz Shaw (Caroline John), not to mention the Brigadier and the UNIT team, the Third Doctor wasn't just our guardian, but our conscience.



"I SOMETIMES THINK THAT MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS"

**Inferno**

This classic boasts some terrific Venusian karate, textbook Third Doctor environmental concerns and one of the most dramatic ticking clock plot devices *Doctor Who* ever gave us. Best of all, it takes the Doctor to an evil alternate timeline with an eyepatch-sporting Brigadier and a frosty Liz Shaw. Pick it up on special edition DVD for £10.

**Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart**

Although Nicholas Courtney's role as the Brigadier spanned beyond Pertwee, and indeed before it, the Third Doctor's enforced time on Earth presented the perfect opportunity to have a human sparring partner as stubborn as he is.

**The Master**

The Master provided a nemesis of intelligence and ability. Roger Delgado blends perfectly with Pertwee; affecting genteel charm and a rapier wit with genuine menace. 'Terror Of The Autons' appears on *The Monsters Collection: The Master* DVD, priced at £7.

**The Scales Of Injustice by Gary Russell**

There's typically more room in the novels to provide the fans with plenty of tidbits and arcana, but Gary Russell's *The Scales Of Injustice* is pure catnip



to fans of *Doctor Who* history, giving the great Liz Shaw a proper send-off. It goes for crazy sums second-hand on Amazon, but is well worth tracking down.

**The Many Deaths Of Jo Grant**

Jo was always a bit of a dippy companion, so with this in mind this surprisingly dark audio



story from Cavan Scott and Mark Wright proves to be an excellent counterbalance to her on-screen portrayals, as well as allowing Katy Manning the opportunity to show off the previously unheralded depth of her range. Pick up the Big Finish CD for £8.99, or instead get the digital download version for £7.99.



ULTIMATE CELEBRATION

Doctor Who

4th

Tom Baker 1974-81

Companions: Sarah Jane Smith, Harry Sullivan, Leela, Romana, Adric, Nyssa, Tegan Jovanka, K9

In so far as the question "Which is the best Doctor?" can be answered, most people will tell you that it was Tom Baker who truly perfected the character. That intelligence, sense of humour and dash of arrogance was now combined with Baker's inimitable delivery and big gleeful grin. Confront the Doctor with certain death, and you'll be faced with someone who can't wait to see what you've brought to kill him with.

Baker's status as the definitive Doctor is helped by the length of time he spent in the role. This is not to say that he needed time to develop; his performance is perfect, and his second story, 'The Ark In Space', is one of his very best. But Baker saw the role through changes in style and tone at a time when the writing was often absolutely superb. Under producer Phillip Hinchliffe, the show went back to the stars, allowing for more ambitious science fiction storylines. The Fourth Doctor was endlessly adaptable and worked brilliantly with a range of companions, from Sarah Jane (Elisabeth Sladen) and the savage Leela (Louise Jameson) to the two Romanas (Mary Tamm and Lalla Ward).

Perhaps what really makes the Fourth Doctor great is the fact that Baker does not shy away from the character's alien identity. With increasing emphasis on his humanity, watching Baker's fascination at life, the universe and everything, not to mention his nimble mood changes, reminds us that the Doctor isn't one of us. He'll save the day, but will have fun doing so. "Well, of course I'm being childish! There's no point being grown-up if you can't be childish sometimes."



"THAT'S THE EMPTY RHETORIC OF A DEFEATED DICTATOR – AND I DON'T LIKE YOUR FACE, EITHER"



Sarah Jane Smith

Introduced during Pertwee's tenure, Sarah Jane really came into her own when partnered with the Fourth Doctor. Elisabeth Sladen's performance was simply superb. As brave, clever and quick-witted as her partner, Sarah Jane is the quintessential companion.



Davros

The Fourth Doctor faced down everything from deadly plants and giant rats to intergalactic art thieves, but Davros' megalomania in 'The Genesis Of The Daleks' is matched by his complete absence of remorse. Pick it up on DVD for £6.50.



Managra by Stephen Marley

This gloriously mad novel finds the Doctor and Sarah Jane in Europa, a reimagined future Europe designed by madmen and populated by historical figures like Mary Shelley, Elizabeth Bathory and Lord Byron. You can pick it up used for £3.95 from Amazon.

THE BEST OF BAKER

Because the definitive Doctor deserves more than one story



HORROR OF FANG ROCK

1 The Doctor is at his most alien as he and Leela are trapped in a lighthouse with expendable civilians and a green alien menace in this

superb episode. Pick it up on DVD for £7.85.



CITY OF DEATH

2 The Doctor and Romana's trip to Paris is interrupted by Julian Glover's extraterrestrial art thief in Douglas Adams' delightful romp. Hilarious and simply joyous, buy

it on DVD for £4.99.



THE ARK IN SPACE

3 The decision to push the sci-fi element resulted in this excellent space-station bound body horror, as the Doctor, Sarah Jane and Harry encounter the terrifying Wirrn. Get

it on Special Edition DVD for £11.99.



PYRAMIDS OF MARS

4 A country house provides the setting for a potential alien invasion in this terrific story, which manages to combine mummies and aliens

to great effect. Pick it up on DVD for £6.88.

Peter Davison 1981-84

Companions: Adric, Nyssa, Tegan Jovanka, Vislor Turlough, Peri Brown



While the storylines under John Nathan-Turner's guidance were growing increasingly schizophrenic (look at where 'Earthshock' starts and where it ends), Peter Davison's performance as the Fifth Doctor acts as its anchor. As if reacting to his previous incarnation's mercurial nature, the Fifth Doctor is all too aware of issues like consequence and responsibility.

Look beyond the celery and the boyish face, and you'll find elements of several Doctors making up Davison's

considered performance. There's a hint of the Pertwee swagger in Five's cricket costume and confidence in his intellectual superiority. He's prone to fits of temper, and shares the First Doctor's role as a teacher. Unlike Hartnell, however, he's more of an older brother than a grandfather, and more of a supply teacher on a school trip than a headmaster. If Five sometimes seems stropky it's partly because he's been burdened with some of the most insubordinate companions in *Who* history. If you had to deal with Adric (Matthew Waterhouse)'s constant

questioning and Tegan (Janet Fielding)'s incessant complaining then you would be a bit grumpy too. But this transforms the relationship with the Doctor from a double act to a family in a way that would be key to Russell T Davies' era. For all his outbursts, there's a reason why "Brave heart, Tegan" is his catchphrase.

Davison's performance shines because of the humanity he brings to the character. When he is forced to resort to murder in 'Warriors Of The Deep', the realisation of his failure is heartbreaking: "There should have been another way."

"OH, MARVELLOUS. YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME. WHAT A FINELY TUNED RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION"

Davison's costume, as proposed by designer Colin Lavers.

Design: frockcoat, skirt, vest, tie, knitted waistcoat, striped trousers, etc.



The Caves Of Androzani
The scheming and conflict provides an excellent backdrop to the Doctor's final moment of taking responsibility: sacrificing his own life to save the life of Peri, who had only been introduced in the previous story. Pick it up on Special Edition DVD as part of the *Revisitations 1* boxset for £13.50.



Tegan, Nyssa and Adric
The travellers in the TARDIS became a proper family for the first time since Hartnell, as the Doctor took care of the precocious Adric, outspoken Tegan and retiring Nyssa. It's when the unit breaks apart with the death of Adric that we appreciate what the Doctor has lost.



Black Guardian
Although the Black Guardian and his benign counterpart the White Guardian first appeared during the Fourth Doctor's run, the Fifth Doctor endured most of the chaos master's wrath and scheming. Pick up the *Black Guardian Trilogy* DVD boxset for £15.02.



Goth Opera by Paul Cornell
If only the Fifth Doctor had been allowed to have this much fun on screen. Paul Cornell's delightfully mad and dark Missing Adventure sees the Doctor and Tegan confronted with a flying vampire baby (among other things). It's available second-hand from as little as £2.01.

Spare Parts
Taking its inspiration from the Fourth Doctor story 'Genesis Of The Daleks', Marc Platt's *Spare Parts* places the Doctor at the point of the Cybermen's origin as he and Nyssa find a Fifties London on the verge of a terrifying discovery. Pick it up from Big Finish for £5 as a CD or £2.99 as a digital download.



ULTIMATE CE

Doctor Who

Colin Baker 1984-86

Companions: Peri Brown, Mel Bush

A violent beginning throttling companion Peri (Nicola Bryant) gave way to a violent middle – placed on hiatus by infamously *Who*-phobic BBC controller Michael Grade – and then a violent end as star Colin Baker was crudely jettisoned at the request of BBC management. The era is dismissed as *Doctor Who*'s lowest ebb – the victim of John Nathan-Turner's scrabble for ratings in a changing cultural landscape – and its star is widely derided, sinking to the bottom of every 'favourite Doctor' poll with wearying regularity, but consensus is flawed, and it was consensus that Six was here to battle.

He defeated a Davros concerned with "consumer resistance" of selling the dead as meat, and reformed the televised executions on the prison planet of Varos, holding up a funhouse mirror to the morally grey excesses and unchained capitalism of Margaret Thatcher's Britain. Worthy of dismissal? Worthy of derision? No on both counts; Six is every bit as deserving of his place in the pantheon.

"REST IS FOR THE WEARY, SLEEP IS FOR THE DEAD"

Like all who followed, he mixes and matches attributes from his predecessors – Hartnell's prickliness

and selfishness, Tom Baker's otherworldliness and Pertwee's theatrical self-importance – and to all who follow he bequeaths his own set in Sylvester McCoy's darkness and force of personality and David Tennant's burning sense of unquenchable outrage.

There may have been few genuinely good stories during this era, but buried amid even the weakest was a glimmer of the character that Baker wanted to see – one that would eventually find its outlet in books and audio adventures, armed with fearsome intellect and self-confidence that bordered on hubris, the galaxy knew no more dangerous a foe than the Sixth Doctor angered. The Daleks may have referred to the Seventh Doctor as "the Oncoming Storm", but it was the Sixth Doctor who truly personified a destructive, unstoppable force of nature, and when he stares down his own people in "Trial Of A Time Lord" and calls them out on their hypocrisy, it raises the hackles.

As for his costume? Well, nobody came out of popular culture in the mid-Eighties looking good...



Vengeance On Varos

This two-parter has the infamous 'acid bath' scene, but the supposed cruelty masks a searing critique, prefiguring the reality



TV boom by decades as the Doctor visits a world where torture is broadcast. Not unlike Colin Baker's Pussycat Dolls dance on *I'm A Celebrity*, actually. Pick it up on Special Edition DVD for £8.37.



Peri Nicola Bryant's outspoken

Californian rubbed up the Doctor the wrong way, but when she had her head shaved and body given to a space slug in 'Mindlash', it was the performance of a lifetime – undermined by a clumsily rewritten conclusion in 'Trial Of A Time Lord'.



Business Unusual by Gary Russell

Bonnie Langford's introduction as Mel never occurred on screen, so Gary Russell filled in the gaps with this Third Doctor-style tale of a



sinister corporation, a vicious green-eyed dog and UNIT. Russell deftly goes beyond the template and makes us care deeply, so pick it up second-hand for £2.70 from Amazon.



Jubilee

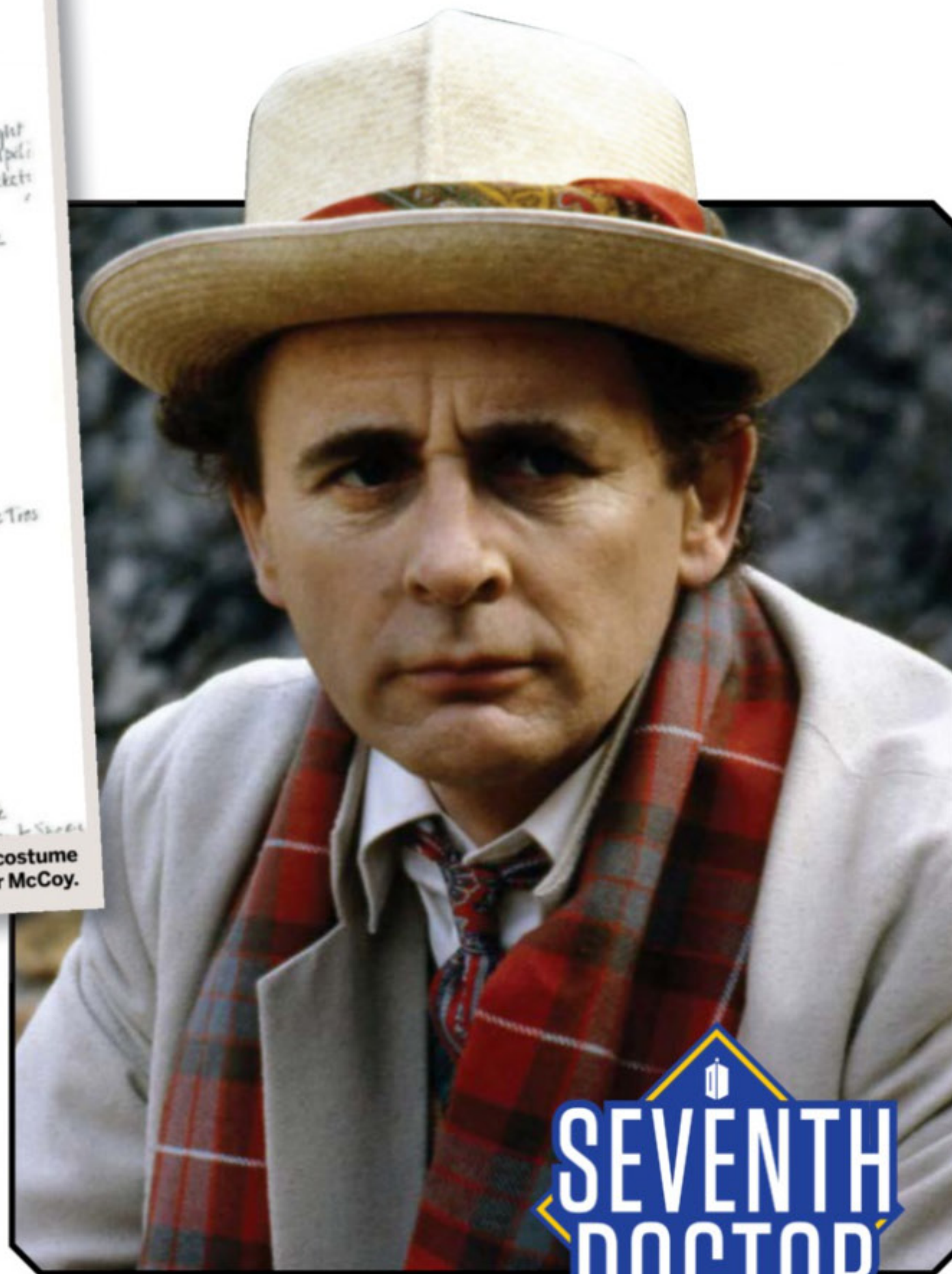
The 2003 Big Finish audio that would inspire 2005's 'Dalek', yet it was a small part of the complex moral maze drawn from Robert Shearman's masterful full-cast audio that forces all – human, Dalek, and Time Lord – to consider just who the real evil is. Get it now for £5 as a CD or £2.99 as a digital download.



Thirteen
1984-1986
Eddie

Colin Baker

Sweetest in
Base West
Pale Love
Bright gas
Red Gies



Sylvester McCoy 1987-89, 1996
Companions: Mel Bush, Ace



VIRGIN TERRITORY

The four best Virgin New Adventures



HUMAN NATURE

PAUL CORNELL

1 A stone-cold classic that was adapted by its author into the TV storyline of the same name. Snatch it up as soon as you see it.



LUNGBARROW

MARC PLATT

2 The Doctor's heritage is finally revealed in the expansive *Lungbarrow*, which brought a close to the Seventh Doctor's era.



JUST WAR

LANCE PARKIN

3 One of the most shocking stories, as the Doctor deals with the true horror of the Nazis in this rare historical tale. Goes for silly money second hand.



NIGHTSHADE

MARK GATISS

4 Gatiss throws in another of his loves with Quatermass analogue Professor Nightshade in this early one. Get it for as little as 48p.

He capped an era as *Doctor Who* was taken off the air for what seemed like good, but from the moment Sylvester McCoy's Seventh Doctor hit his stride – somewhere prior to 'Remembrance Of The Daleks' – it felt as though this darker, increasingly enigmatic Time Lord was finally resolving unfinished business.

Heir to Colin Baker's darkness and fierce willpower and something of Troughton and Tom Baker's clownish misdirection, the Seventh Doctor's real crowning achievement – the moment that showed

just what kind of Doctor he was – wasn't destroying the Daleks or the Cybermen, but talking a sniper into dropping his rifle in the bleakly allegorical 'Happiness Patrol'. "Why don't you do it then?" he spat with a terrifying intensity, "Look me in the eye. Pull the trigger. End my life."

For all the capering, this was a Doctor who kept his secrets and toyed with his companions' destinies, and unlike the 11th, who lied and schemed to keep Amy and Rory in the dark, the Seventh did what he had to do, deploying those

who trusted him like chess pieces in his duel with Fenric. No wonder Ten – the ultimate humanist – recalled in 'The End Of Time Part 2' "I got worse; tricked people into taking their own lives," but then Ten channelled a little of Seven himself when he brought down a prime minister by saying "Doesn't she look tired?" or banished the Family to their fates worse than death in 'The Family Of Blood' (itself based on a book with Seven as its star).

Like new *Who*, the Seventh Doctor's era revelled in mysteries and slow-burning arcs, and with Ace (Sophie Aldred) placed the intensely

relatable everygirl companion at the heart of the mythology – no mere exposition sponge like the companions of yesterday. When cancellation came in 1989, it was bittersweet. Fandom lost its foci, but became more passionately entrenched around a *Doctor Who* line that could develop these ideas in ways the show never could in the New Adventures, where future writers and showrunners like Mark Gatiss, Paul Cornell, Steven Moffat, Russell T Davies and Gareth Roberts made their mark.

"WE ALL HAVE A UNIVERSE OF OUR OWN TERRORS TO FACE"

The Happiness Patrol



A revolution in a single night, this politically charged, studio-bound story is the best self-contained adventure of the era. Bertie Bassett-aping executioner the Kandyman is far more surreally impressive than you remember, too, so get it on DVD as part of the *Ace Adventures* boxset for £15.66.



Ace
Troubled arsonist Dorothy 'Ace' McShane prefigured the modern companion – sassy, strong-willed and not above smashing up a Dalek with a baseball bat. At the centre of many of the best stories, Sophie Aldred gave the character a rare level of authenticity.



Fenric
Like the Sixth Doctor, the Seventh doesn't have many recurring foes, but Fenric's chess match with the Doctor consumed his darkest season, and the Time Lord's battle of wills with this ancient evil is still spine-chilling. Pick up *The Curse Of Fenric* on DVD for £6.50.



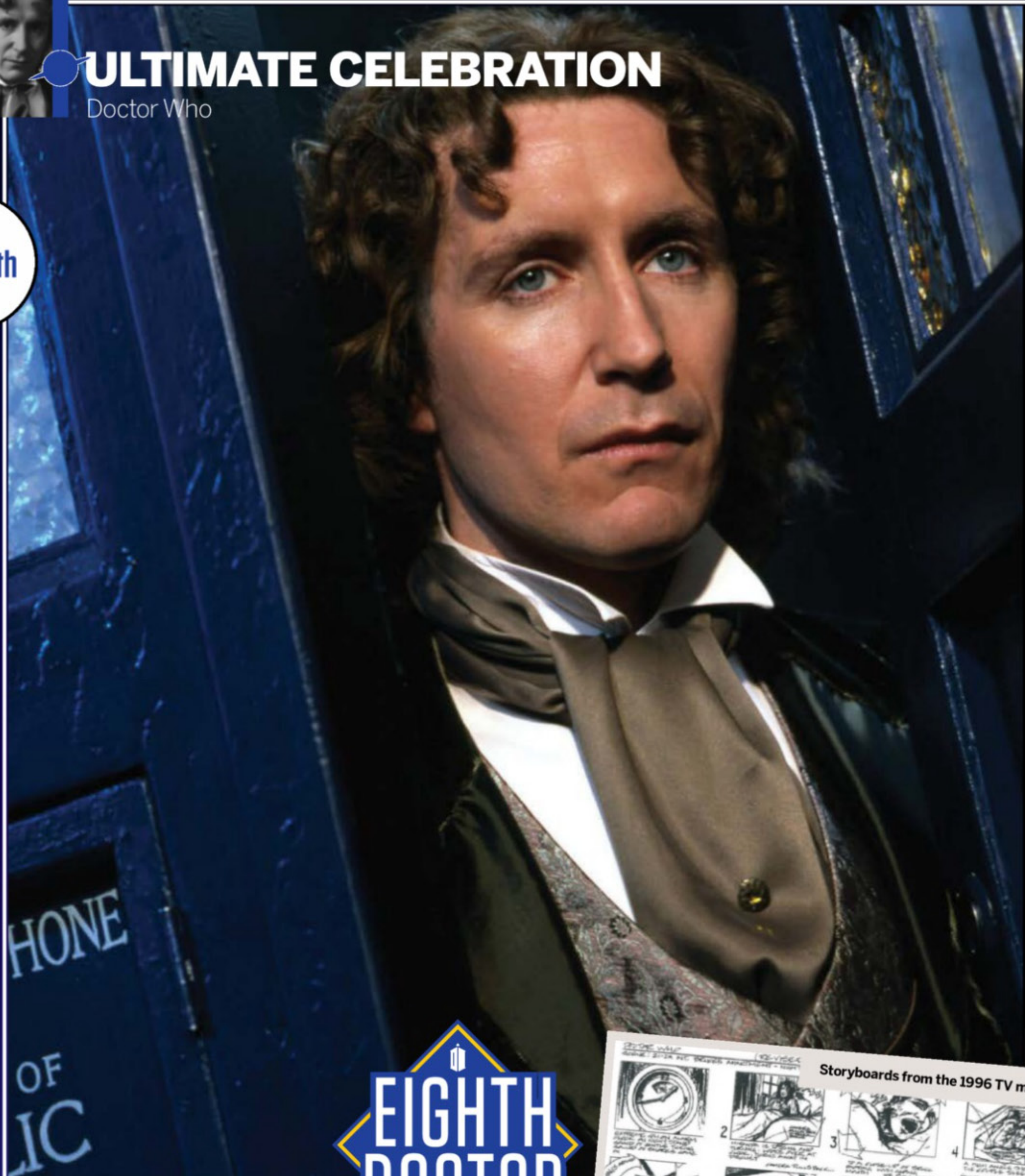
The Fires Of Vulcan
The first Big Finish Doctor, there's plenty of Seventh adventures to choose from, but Steve Lyons' Pompeii-set 'The Fires Of Vulcan' is all the more remarkable for featuring Bonnie Langford's Mel. Available on CD for £5 or digital download for £2.99, get it now.



ULTIMATE CELEBRATION

Doctor Who

8th



EIGHTH DOCTOR
08

Paul McGann 1996

Companion: Grace Holloway

It's a testament to just how good Paul McGann's performance as the Doctor is that the TV movie is, for the most part, considered canon. This is the clunky, cheesy TV movie that stated that the Doctor was half human, had the Master as a translucent cobra thing that made Eric Roberts spit goo at everything, and shot Sylvester McCoy. But the TV movie has Paul McGann, whose performance as the Eighth Doctor is absolutely marvellous.

McGann has since made no bones about the fact that he didn't appreciate being made to wear a wig, and he's had a new costume created for his Big Finish audios, but his look fitted his Doctor perfectly. Eight is a romantic in every sense of the word, and after the eccentricities of McCoy, McGann is brimming with

joy and the possibility of adventure. There's none of the arrogance that often comes with the role; instead, he's puzzled as to why no one believes him, which is contrasted beautifully with Daphne Ashbrook's cynical, world-weary Grace.

The Eighth Doctor doesn't actually appear in the TV movie until over 20 minutes in, at which point he's suffering from a bout of amnesia, making his subsequent rediscovery of his identity, history and abilities all the more joyful (and that kiss with Grace is fine, by the way).

The Eighth Doctor belongs to a world of wonderful possibilities, and it's one of the real tragedies of *Doctor Who* that such a marvellous interpretation of the

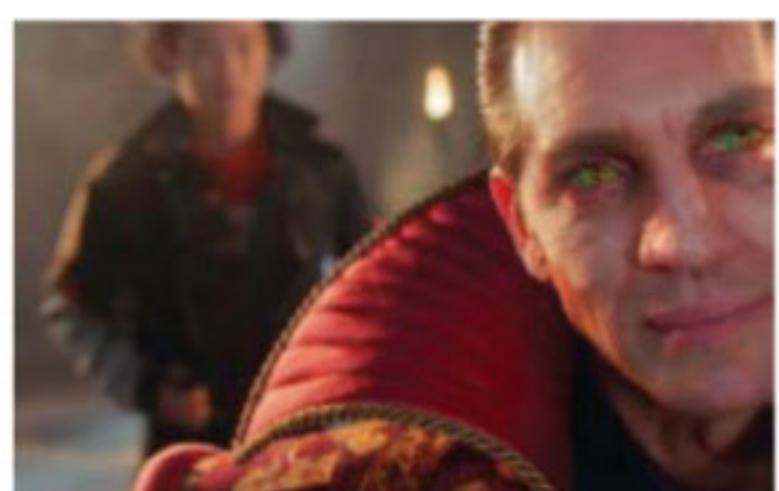
character was given such a brief time to shine. Subsequent novels and audiobooks have explored him in more detail and given him some darker shades, but he'll always be the Peter Pan of the Doctors. "Grace, I came back to life. I held back death. Look, I can't make your dream come true forever, but I can make it come true today!"

"THE SKY ABOVE US WAS DANCING WITH LIGHTS. PURPLE, GREEN, BRILLIANT YELLOW. YES! THESE SHOES! THEY FIT PERFECTLY!"



Grace Holloway

Grace gets quite the introduction, interrupting an opera to run in slow-motion down a hospital corridor in her ball gown, and she proves to be exactly the grounded, world-weary counterbalance that the romantic Eighth Doctor needs. Admittedly, the script doesn't always do her a lot of favours, but Daphne Ashbrook's chemistry with McGann is often overlooked.



The Master

Well, we couldn't really choose anyone else. Eric Roberts' performance as the Master has the kind of campy excesses that come from an actor who's just there to enjoy himself. "I always... dressss for the occasion," he hisses, and it's impossible to suppress a giggle and shudder. Pick up the movie on Special Edition DVD as part of the *Revisitations 1* boxset for £13.50.



Alien Bodies by Lawrence Miles

There's a wealth of brilliant Eighth Doctor books and audios to choose from, but we've gone for Lawrence Miles' *Alien*

Bodies, which sees the Doctor come face to face with his own dead body, predating this year's 'The Name Of The Doctor'. Pick it up used for £5.58 from Amazon.



Storm Warning

The start of the Eighth's Big Finish adventures, writer Alan Barnes

retains the best of the movie depiction and pairs him up with new companion Charley Pollard. A tremendous start to an incredibly fertile range, *Storm Warning* is available on CD for £5 or digital download for £2.99.

Christopher Eccleston

2005

Companion: Rose Tyler

One of Russell T Davies' many strokes of genius when revitalising the Doctor was the decision not to cast the kind of actor you'd expect to see occupying the TARDIS. There was no floppy hair, cape or BBC pronunciation. Christopher Eccleston's Doctor was a breath of fresh air; hair cropped close to his head and bombing around in a leather jacket. The Ninth Doctor has no pretensions of dandy-ness. He's got all of Pertwee's swagger with none of the airs or graces.

Which isn't to say he's glum. One of the biggest surprises about Eccleston's performance is just how perfect his chemistry with Billie Piper's Rose Tyler was. While David Tennant might be the definitive Doctor for a new generation, it was Eccleston's brilliant turn that brought the character back from the dead and re-energised it. He's temperamental and excitable, and he's going to get the job done.

Of course, Nine's bravado covers an ocean of grief. Davies' decision to wipe out the Time Lords gave the character the guilt of two genocides to carry around with him (although the Daleks' return took that back to one). Not only did this make the Doctor even more determined to protect the people he cared about; it gave him a new sense of joie de vivre. It was always safe to assume that Eccleston could deliver a dramatic Doctor; one who could face down an army by walking up to them and telling them his name. What we should not forget is that he managed to give the alien who's seen it all a will to seize the day. "Rose, before I go, I just want to tell you: you were fantastic. Absolutely fantastic. And do you know what? So was I!"



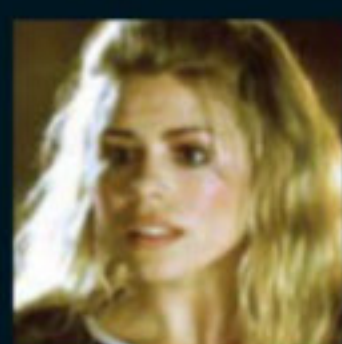
"YOU MIGHT HAVE REMOVED ALL OF YOUR EMOTIONS, BUT I RECKON DEEP DOWN IN YOUR DNA, THERE'S STILL ONE LITTLE SPARK LEFT. AND THAT'S FEAR. DOESN'T IT JUST BURN WHEN YOU FACE ME?"



Dalek
Believing that he

had wiped out the entire Dalek race as well as the Time Lords, the Doctor gets a nasty shock when he finds

a surviving Dalek in an underground collection. Pick it up as part of the *Dalek Collection* DVD for £5.15.



Rose Tyler
David Tennant's

Tenth may have shared a closer bond with Piper's

headstrong Londoner, but it was the Eighth Doctor who showed her the universe. They help each other grow in 'Father's Day' and 'Dalek', and their partnership in episodes like 'The Unquiet Dead' and 'The Empty Child' is brilliant.



Slitheen
Not the most iconic

Who monster, to be sure, but the Eighth Doctor faced the

rotund, farting alien menaces in three of his 13 episodes. The Slitheen are a good example of a Russell T Davies-era creature; the show didn't shy away from their monsters, and there's no forgetting the Slitheen.

REGENERATION GAME

The new series had more in common with classic *Who* than some might think

Companion

Ace versus Rose

Both characters have a fully fledged life before they enter the TARDIS. Complicated and forthright, what they've left behind is as important as their travels with the Doctor.



Naff guest star
Kenn Dodd versus Trinnie and Susannah

The reality TV-skewering (well, light poking) in the 'Bad Wolf'/'The Parting Of The Ways' wasn't as naff as Kenn Dodd in the McCoy era, but it was close.



Catface Alien
Cheetah People versus Catkind

Need we say more?





ULTIMATE CELEBRATION

Doctor Who



Family Of Blood

The Time

Lord is under the guise of John Smith, an early 20th Century schoolmaster who's convinced his parents are Verity and Sydney (in a neat nod to the show's creators). It's a beautifully drawn character study of a man who doesn't want to accept his destiny. Pick it up on the Series Three Volume Three DVD for £4.46.



Donna Noble

By the

time Donna came along, the Doctor was exhausted by admirers. "I just want a mate," he sighed, to which came the incredulous reply, "You just want to mate?!" It was the start of a funny, warm friendship, a refreshing change of pace that Donna saw him as "long streak of nothing."



Weeping Angels

The screaming sculptures were a stroke of genius. The concept – that these living statues were unable to move unless you blinked – was powerfully creepy, as was the montage of monuments at the end of the 2007 episode 'Blink', and the knowledge that you'll never look at one the same again. 'Blink' also appears on the Series Three Volume Three DVD for £4.46



Prisoner Of The Daleks by Trevor Baxendale

Terry Nation's estate fiercely protects this eternal enemy, making this full-length novel a rarity. The tone is dark, the dialogue totally Tennant, and there are more Daleks than you can shake a pepperpot at. Pick it up for £5.34 from Amazon.



Doctor Who At The BBC: The Tenth Doctor

This behind-the-scenes look is presented by the late Elisabeth Sladen, and includes interviews with the cast, a look at how the show is made, and an audio scrapbook of Who-related appearances on shows like *Blue Peter* and *Friday Night With Jonathan Ross*. This release is available as a download from AudioGo, priced at £2.99.

David Tennant

2005-2010

Companions: Rose Tyler, Micky Smith, Martha Jones, Donna Noble

This regeneration was one of the smoothest passing of the screwdrivers in Whostory.

Companion Rose Tyler and showrunner Russell T Davies remained, and thus the story continued with a capable new lead. A true fan of the show, he had already lent his voice to Big Finish audio plays and the animated *Scream Of The Shalka*, so he was poised at the start line, best Converse-clad foot forward, when the gun fired and Series Two began.

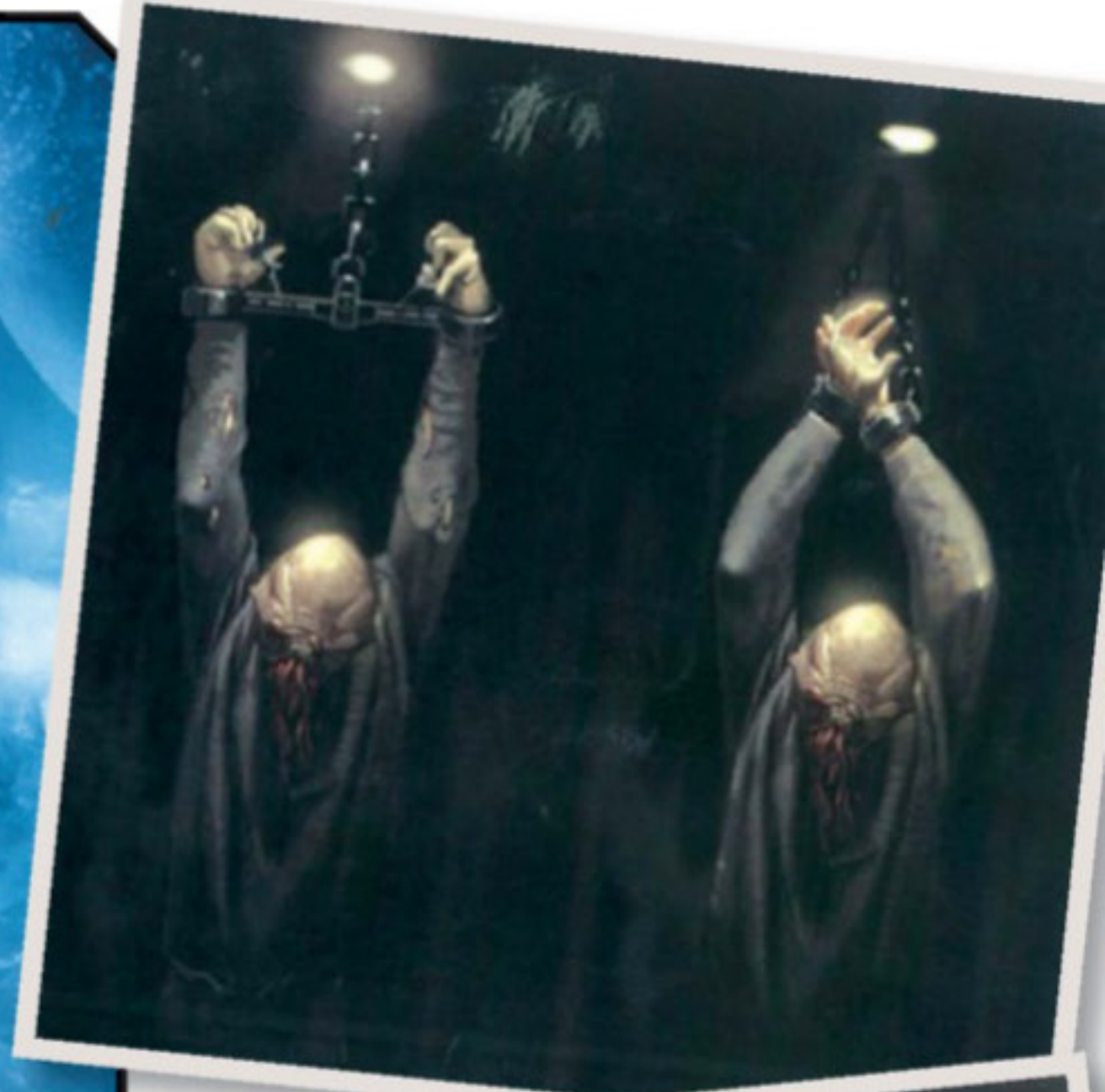
Quite possibly the fastest, most frantic Time Lord ever to operate the TARDIS, the Tenth spent much of his time dashing down corridors and speaking at a rate of one million words a minute. He had good reason too, as he faced a Judoon

platoon on the moon, a library full of Vashta Nerada and Rose Tyler's mother brandishing a sandwich. This incarnation was imbued with infectious, childlike wonder, regularly shouting "Fantastic!" "Brilliant!" and "Oh yes!" as he was reunited with Time Lord's best friend K-9 and his greatest companion, Sarah Jane, along the way.

Often described as the most human of all the Doctors, the Tenth wasn't afraid to cry. He wept over the Master (John Simm)'s body and for the time-displaced Rose, and fought passionately when

something loomed menacingly in the skies. There was also an incredibly romantic side to the character that we'd never really glimpsed before. YouTube is riddled with fan-made clips of his lip-locking escapades, which included Astrid (Kylie Minogue), Madame du Pompadour (Sophia Myles), Lady Christina de Souza (Michelle Ryan), Martha (Freema Agyeman) and, unforgettably, Rose. The Tenth's tenure was consistently high-energy, always entertaining and often emotional. When his time was up he didn't want to go, and neither did we.

"YOU CAN SPEND YOUR WHOLE LIFE WITH ME, BUT I CAN'T SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE WITH YOU"



Matthew Savage's concept art for 'Dalek' was far more vicious than the episode, showing the creature being tortured.



"YOU SEE THESE EYES, THEY'RE OLD EYES. AND ONE THING I CAN TELL YOU: MONSTERS ARE REAL"

ELEVENTH DOCTOR

Matt Smith 2010-2013

Companion: Amy Pond, Rory Williams, Clara Oswin Oswald



Too young!" the cynics cried, "He's got an emo haircut," they blustered. Following the BBC special that unveiled a then 26-year-old Matt Smith (and sparking a new regeneration tradition), a section of fans tried to push him off the TARDIS before he'd even got a foothold. The fact that most of the naysayers are now ranting that his successor, Peter Capaldi, is "too old" is a testament to how Smith won over the critics with unrelenting gusto and quality performances beyond his years.

Smith actually restored some of the misplaced 'alienness' of the character. He was no longer the romantic lead and, in fact, was more childlike in his response to yucky things like girls and smooching. It was this naivety and eccentric, extra-terrestrial nature that dispelled any potential unease from meeting both eventual companions, Amy (Karen Gillan) and Clara (Jenna-Louise Coleman) as children. The Doctor is very much a man of the universe again, invoking wide-eyed wonder at dinosaurs on a spaceship, vampires in Venice, bowties and fezzes.

Smith's series will be remembered for the mini movie-style episodes that came with their own cinematic posters, adding to the feeling that each was a true event. But despite the epic scale – going to Spain, New York and Utah – the majority of episodes were more intimate affairs, with the Doctor making house calls. These ranked as some of the most popular of Smith's run, including 'Night

Terrors', about a boy who was terrified of his cupboard, and 'The Lodger', where the Doctor posed as a flatmate, playing football and working in a call centre.

Now his time is almost up, we'll dunk a Jammy Dodger, shed a tear and whisper "Geronimo." Regeneration will keep the character alive, but as the Tenth said, it's not quite the same. "Some new man goes sauntering away. And I'm dead."



TIMES ARE CHANGING

Why 12th Doctor Peter Capaldi marks a victory for fans

This Christmas, we'll see the Spin Doctor become *the* Doctor, as Peter Capaldi fulfils his wildest childhood dreams of becoming the star of *Who*.

Most famous for playing Malcolm Tucker on *The Thick Of It*, it's likely he'll lose the swears, and the fez will probably go effy-bye, but the Scottish accent is staying and, if his introduction video is anything to go by, he'll be able to stop

aliens from destroying the universe just by looking at them.

Moreover, it feels like one of our own has landed the part. As a 14-year-old, he was determined to run the Official *Doctor Who* Fan Club so much so that he'd regularly fire off letters to his teenage rival, offering his assistance. He wrote to the production office and received set designs and episode scripts, and the

Radio Times even dug up an old letter he wrote, aged 15, congratulating the show on its tenth anniversary. Now here he is, on the eve of *Doctor Who*'s 50th year, and he's actually going to become his childhood icon. "Being asked to play the Doctor is an amazing privilege," he says. "Like the Doctor himself I find myself in a state of utter terror and delight. I can't wait to get started."



The Doctor's Wife

Neil Gaiman

personified the one companion the Doctor has experienced every adventure alongside, yet never held a conversation with: the TARDIS, played by Suranne Jones. Pick it up as part of the Complete Series Six DVD or Blu-ray for £13.75 or £15.48.



Amy Pond

The meeting

between young Amelia and the raggedy man kicked off a friendship that would see her get hitched, have a baby, meet her grown-up daughter and become the Doctor's mother-in-law.



The Silents

These

lanky aliens popped up throughout Series Six, trying to kill the Doctor before a forbidden question was asked: 'Doctor Who?'

See them on the Complete Series Six DVD or Blu-ray for £13.75 or £15.48.



Touched By An Angel by Jonathan Morris

Grieving widower Mark

receives a note saying "You can save her". As he tries to change history, the Weeping Angels are waiting. Pick it up for £5.24 from Amazon.



Plague Of The Cybermen by Justin Richards

David Warner reads

this original tale about a 19th Century village plagued by a wasting disease, but the dead don't stay underground for long. This AudioGo release is available on CD for £7.99 or digital download for £6.99.

“THEY WERE
OUTSIDERS CREATING
A SHOW ABOUT THE
ULTIMATE OUTSIDER
MATT STREVENS”



AN UNEARTHLY CHILDHOOD

MARK GATISS TOASTS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DOCTOR WHO WITH HIS LABOUR OF LOVE, AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME. IT TELLS THE NO-HOLDS-BARRED STORY OF HOW THE TIME LORD CRASHED ONTO OUR SCREENS, BRINGING TO LIFE THE CLASSIC MONSTERS, LOST EPISODES AND THE FIRST DOCTOR, AS PRODUCER MATT STREVENS REVEALS...

WORDS JODIE TYLEY



WATCHING AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME – THE DOCUMENTARY DRAMA OF DOCTOR WHO'S CREATION – YOU COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING

you'd travelled back in time to 1963. So convincing is the casting of David Bradley as the frail but frightening First Doctor that it was like meeting a ghost from the past for the show's original director, Waris Hussein, now in his 70s.

"One of the most moving things happened in the Television Centre on our first day of filming," recalls producer Matt Strevens. "It was a corridor scene with David dressed as William Hartnell in full Doctor garb, with the white wig and cloak. Waris was visiting the set that day, and you could just see in his face that he was transported back to when he was 23. He had a tear in his eye and he was lost for words. I think it was eerie for him to be around David as Bill [Hartnell] because he's been gone a long time, and [*Doctor Who's* producer] Verity Lambert's no longer with us, so it was a very emotional experience for him. I felt so privileged to be around these people that were there at the beginning of what has become a part of our lives."

Indeed, this 90-minute docu-drama transports us back further than the Doctor's ever been – to when it was a small show that the BBC had little faith in. The story is as much about

the show's stars and creators as it is about the programme itself, says Strevens. "William Hartnell is the spine of the story, but it also focuses on Verity Lambert and her journey as a young woman in television in a very male-dominated world, trying to make this bonkers show based on an idea that was completely left-field, with no money and no respect from the design departments," he continues. "It was considered a children's programme that the BBC wasn't really bothered about, but it was the vision of Sydney Newman, the new Head of Drama, and his belief in Verity, that pushed the show forward and made it a huge success."

Not only was a science fiction series a huge departure from the usual period dramas clogging up the BBC's schedule, but its creators didn't fit the mould. The stir they caused within the organisation will be explored in *An Adventure In Space And Time*, says Strevens: "There's a scene where one of the crew – the old sort of bitten, cynical cameraman – sits down with the paper and calls them 'a bunch of freaks' under his breath," he tells us. "Sydney Newman was a brash man with loud suits; a very un-BBC character. He was like some Hollywood showman, like PT Barnum. Verity had only been a production assistant before, and a woman producer at the BBC was very rare; and then ➤

MUST-SEE TV

An Adventure In Space And Time

THE ALMOST DOCTOR

A timeline of Mark Gatiss' many adventures with Doctor Who

NIGHTSHADE (NOVEL)

A New Adventures instalment featuring the Seventh Doctor and Ace, where villagers are being killed one by one.



ST ANTHONY'S FIRE (NOVEL)

The Doctor visits the planet Betruthia, where a genocidal war has broken out between the lizard-like inhabitants.



PROBE SERIES (VHS)

Before *Torchwood*, there was *PROBE*. The unlicensed spin-off starred many former *Doctor Who* actors, only in different roles.



THE ROUNDHEADS (NOVEL)

This was part of the BBC's *Past Doctor Adventures* that sees the Second Doctor locked in the Tower of London in 1648.



THE UNQUIET DEAD (TV)

The third story in Series One of *Doctor Who* was Gatiss' first TV episode, where the dead haunt the streets of Cardiff.



LAST OF THE GADERENE (NOVEL)

This 28th *Past Doctor Adventures* instalment marked Gatiss' last novel, about UNIT and a plot to colonise Earth.



BIG FINISH (AUDIO)

Gatiss wrote and starred in *Phantasmagoria*, about the Fifth Doctor and directed by the voice of the Daleks, Nicholas Briggs.



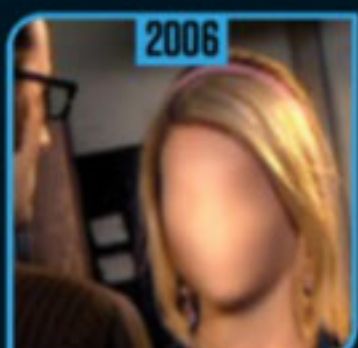
COMEDY SKETCHES (DVD SPECIAL FEATURE)

These officially licensed parodies included Gatiss playing Sydney Newman pitching *Doctor Who*.



THE IDIOT'S LANTERN (TV)

The Tenth Doctor lands on the eve of Elizabeth II's coronation, where a sentient being feasts through the television.



THE LAZARUS EXPERIMENT (TV)

Gatiss didn't write this episode, but it was the first one that he landed a starring role in, as Professor Lazarus.



VICTORY OF THE DALEKS (TV)

Set in Winston Churchill's Cabinet War Rooms, this was controversial for tampering with the design of the Daleks.



A GOOD MAN GOES TO WAR (TV)

The first of a two-parter revealed the identity of River Song and included familiar allies Madame Vastra and Jenny.



THE CRIMSON HORROR (TV)

The updated series' 100th episode focused on Vastra, Jenny and Strax as they investigate the 'crimson horror'.



COLD WAR (TV)

Gatiss brought back the Ice Warriors, last seen 39 years previously, for a Cold War episode with new companion Clara.



THE WEDDING OF RIVER SONG (TV)

The final episode of the series, Gatiss went out with a bang, a kiss and an 'I do' as the Doctor and River Song got hitched.



NIGHT TERRORS (TV)

The Doctor makes a house call to a young boy who's afraid of his bedroom cupboard – and with good reason, as it turns out.



AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME

An Unearthly Childhood



David Bradley portrays First Doctor William Hartnell.



Even writer Mark Gatiss was astonished by the attention to detail.

➤ you had an Indian junior director with Waris Hussein, so the creative team were seen as an interesting bunch. In reality, there were lots of people behind the idea of *Doctor Who*, but our narrative focus is with these few key figures and a fading character actor who feels that he should have been a much bigger star than he was. They were outsiders creating a show about the ultimate outsider."

IT WAS NEWMAN WHO CAME UP WITH THE NAME 'DOCTOR WHO', THE IDEA OF THE MYSTERIOUS CENTRAL CHARACTER AND THE NOW LEGENDARY CONCEPT OF HAVING A TIME MACHINE THAT WAS MUCH BIGGER ON THE INSIDE. BUT IT WAS LAMBERT AND HUSSEIN THAT PERSUADED 55-YEAR-

old Hartnell to take on the role, and this origin story takes us through his three years as the Time Lord until his regeneration into Patrick Troughton (Reece Shearsmith). "It's a wonderful human story about an actor who gets a role late in his career and he's not sure about taking it," he explains, "but it takes him on a journey and transforms him as a man, so there's an element of Dickens in *An Adventure In Space And Time*; it's Scrooge-like, it's *Death Of A Salesman* and *King Lear*. It's a family story about a guy who finds a connection to his own granddaughter through playing the part of this magical Doctor, and he becomes a hero to millions of children. I don't think you need to have ever watched *Doctor Who* to appreciate it as a story in its own right."

Scrooge is a rather apt description for both the Doctor and the actor who played him, as both seemed to warm considerably as time went on. Hartnell's sometimes difficult relationships with people on the show, and the decision to replace him when his health began deteriorating, has dominated *Doctor Who*'s history, and Strevens says this will be a warts-and-all portrayal. "Bill was not an easy man. He wasn't cuddly and he did have his demons, but I think what we show is that he was a great and respected actor, and that he had a redemptive quality to him by doing this role," he continues. "It made him loved by children all over the country; he had been famous as a film actor, but he got a different kind of fame through this."

In Hartnell's words, the Doctor was "a cross between the Wizard Of Oz and Father Christmas," but before landing this child-friendly role, he had been known for playing crooks and bullying army sergeants. It must have been something to do with those knife-edge features that actor David Bradley also shares, as he's been cast in similarly menacing roles, such as Walder Frey in *Game Of Thrones* and the cantankerous caretaker Argus Filch in the *Harry Potter* series. "The looks are uncanny," agrees Strevens, "but he's also an actor with a huge range, who can play the curmudgeon and can seem quite grumpy and austere when you first meet him, but when you get beneath that you see a very vulnerable man. I have to say, David couldn't be further from the characters he plays. He's probably the sweetest, kindest man I've ever worked with, so it was great for us when that came through. So when you first meet William Hartnell he's a bit intimidating, but then David excavates this wonderfully warm, fragile and sort of scared man underneath. It's a truly wonderful performance that reminds me of Alastair Sim playing Scrooge [in the 1951 film]."

On screen, the Doctor travelled with his granddaughter Susan (Carole Ann Ford) but his adventures were documented by his real-life granddaughter, Jessica Carney, in the biography *Who's There? The Life And Career Of William Hartnell*, which has been updated and published to coincide with the show's

50th anniversary. Carney often visited the set to watch filming of *An Adventure In Space And Time*, and was very moved by what she saw, reveals Strevens. "She told me that on the night this film goes out, the family are going to have to have a box of tissues nearby, because it's quite emotional." Hartnell's family weren't the only ones on hand to share anecdotes from the time, however, as original cast members were invited back for cameos. Among the familiar faces is Susan herself, Carole Ann Ford and William Russell, who played Ian Chesterton. "They told us stories about what William was like and how they felt about it at the time," he says. "None of them knew how big the show would become. Nowadays, you realise that if you even have just a small part in *Doctor Who* you become part of the canon forever, but in those days they had no idea. William Russell is almost 90 now, and he's still talking about this thing all these years later."

Speaking to the original cast members was just a small part of Mark Gatiss' mission to make this genesis story as authentic as possible in the absence of a real time machine. Original blueprints for the TARDIS were recovered and the set was built exactly to spec to please even the most eagle-eyed Whovians. "The original console would have been made in a prop store with lots of old dials and gas gauges, but nowadays none of those parts are available, so every single part had to be moulded and cast from the original and put together,"

he explains. "We could have stuck on any old knobs and levers, but we wanted it to match exactly, so it was all painstakingly designed and put together. We've recreated the original junkyard prop for prop from the first episode, and the costumes were all handmade, along with the original Cybermen and Daleks."

Classic episodes and moments have been recreated, including 'The Dalek Invasion Of Earth', where they closed Westminster Bridge in order to send Daleks across it. These metal menaces aren't the only adversaries we'll see, as Strevens reveals: "The Menoptra and the Zarbi [from Series Two episode 'The Web Planet'] knock around, too. We've recreated moments of lost episodes as well, like [the fourth serial] 'Marco Polo', and the original actor who played Marco Polo [Mark Eden] is playing the head BBC Drama guy who bugs Sydney Newman, so there are lots of little moments for people who went right back and watched the original series."

Unlike *Doctor Who*'s early run, however, *An Adventure In Space And Time* will be in colour, except for the excerpts of the re-created episodes. "It's a film within a film," he clarifies, "so we show the cast filming the first episode with colourful sets and costumes, and then we play back clips in a screening within our film." These scenes were recorded using the cumbersome Marconi cameras that gave the original crew bad backs in the Sixties. It all added to the authenticity that exceeded even Mark Gatiss' expectations. He had pitched a similar idea to celebrate the show's 40th anniversary. "The best he had envisaged might be a half-hour on BBC Four, very low budget and almost sketch-like," says Strevens. "It was always going to be the story of the first Doctor, but as with any biopic, it's a case of what story do you tell? Is it the story of William Hartnell or the invention of this famous show? We managed to do both. The story will only be told once because it's the genesis story, but I think it will be a family film you can watch again and again."

An Adventure In Space And Time will air on BBC One on 23 November, commemorating 50 years of *Doctor Who*.

**WE'VE
RECREATED MOMENTS
OF LOST EPISODES**
MATT STREVEN





ON SET FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

WHO'S GOING TO COMPANY

WORDS
JONATHAN
HATFULL

THE DAY OF THE DOCTOR WILL SEE **MATT SMITH'S DOCTOR SHARE THE TARDIS WITH DAVID TENNANT** AND BILLIE PIPER IN AN EPISODE GUARANTEED TO BLOW THE MINDS OF FANS EVERYWHERE. **SCIFINOW HEADS TO CARDIFF TO TALK TO THE CAST** ABOUT ANNIVERSARY PRESSURE, SONIC SCREWDRIVERS, RETURNING TO DOCTOR WHO AND WHY JOANNA PAGE'S BABY GOT SLIMED...

YOU CAN ASSUME WHATEVER YOU WANT TO, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT ASSUMPTION IS, DON'T YOU?" LAUGHS MATT SMITH, AS THE NEARLY DEPARTED TIME LORD BLOCKS OUR attempts to get some spoilers out of him. "It's the mother of something!"

SciFiNow is on set at BBC Cardiff for the 50th anniversary special of *Doctor Who*, and the atmosphere is something akin to arriving early for your own surprise party. Even glimpsing *Gavin & Stacey*'s Joanna Page at a writing desk feels like a security breach as we're ushered away to the spoiler-free confines of the TARDIS. When we walk

back past her, now safe in the knowledge that we can cross "Throw that big lever in the TARDIS" off our bucket list, clearance has been granted and it's deemed safe to let us watch her write at a desk by candlelight. "What am I allowed to say?" she asks, before confirming that she is indeed playing Queen Elizabeth I.

"It's so scary, because your name is written across every single page of the script," she explains. "My God, don't put them in the bin! Make sure I shred them!" I'm terrified that something's going to be found on the pavement and it's going to have ➤





SET VISIT

Doctor Who



THE IMPOSSIBLE GIRL

◆ How has it been filming with David and Billie?

It's great, I'm just enjoying having a gang. It often feels like it's me and Matt, so at the moment coming onto set feels like a huge gang of us. It's great, swapping tales and *Doctor Who* stories and things that we could only possibly understand. It's really kind of fun. But it is a funny thing, obviously I'm developing a new dynamic with David, but at the end of it I always feel like I have to go and sit next to Matt.

◆ What's it been like watching Matt and David together?

That's what's really wonderful about first of all what's in the script, and then seeing the Matt and David dynamic come together. They are the same man, so it's almost like "What is going on inside his head?" They antagonise each other really well, and also make each other laugh, so they complement each other very well.

◆ How is your research into old *Doctor Who* going?

Thank God Matt's not here, because I said "I've started watching the classics" and Matt started to quiz me in a room full of interviewers, which wasn't fun. I'm not going to hold my hands up and say I'd be able to give a lecture, but what's been really nice is since I've had the first season, I've gone back a little bit and had a load of classics delivered. So now I feel like I've got my first season out of the way I can go back and enjoy it.

◆ How's the 50th year been for you, with all the speculation?

I'm hearing so many rumours about the celebrations and what's going to be going on, but yeah, it's really exciting, you feel it on set. I mean, the first time we did the 3D we were in the TARDIS on the first day, and I saw Matt popping out of the screen. The show lends itself so well to it, more than I even thought, but imagine the TARDIS in 3D! There's definitely that buzz on set, and obviously we've got this gang and everybody's back, so it does feel like a real celebration.

⇒ 'Joanna Page' over it and then they're going to hang me." From John Hurt's role to the basic storyline of the episode ("He realises that he's actually got ginger hair," jokes Smith), the details are locked up so tight that even the indomitable Sarah Jane Smith would struggle to unearth any juicy tidbits.

WHILE THE HUNT FOR SPOILERS PROVES FRUITLESS, PERHAPS THE BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BEFORE FILMING BEGAN.

Three years after his departure, pinstriped, Converse-wearing, cockatoo-quiffed emotional rollercoaster David Tennant is picking up his sonic screwdriver to join Matt Smith in the TARDIS. "It's a multiple Doctor story with two Doctors," enthuses Smith. "It's just a very interesting idea, that he meets himself and is sort of disapproving!

They get on quite well as well – it sort of ebbs and flows quite madly as any *Doctor Who* does. I think it would have been disappointing not to have another Doctor back. I'm really pleased there's a couple of Doctors in it because I think that's really important for the 50th and the fans to have more bang for their buck, as it were. When you start these things you don't really know how it's going to be, but we get on brilliantly well, me and Dave.

"I think having the meeting of Doctors sort of sprinkles a bit of fairy dust on it, you know? Even for the crew and everyone, just seeing the costumes next to each other, seeing the Converse and the bow tie... it's kind of cool."

Of course, it's not the first time that Tennant and Smith and have been in an episode together, as the Tenth Doctor's

victory lap in 'The End Of Time' concluded with Smith seizing the controls of a crashing TARDIS. However, we've yet to see them share the screen, and with Billie Piper's Rose Tyler also returning it's fair to say that our expectations are pretty high.

It's certainly a thrill when Tennant enters the room dressed as the Tenth Doctor. Clad as he is in the blue pinstripes and Converse (yes, we checked his shoes), it's almost a surprise when we hear his natural Scottish accent instead of the Tenth's Estuary tones. "When you start *Doctor Who*, the question you're asked continuously is 'When are you leaving?'" he smiles, "and as soon as you leave *Doctor Who* the question you're asked continuously is 'When are you coming back?' So it's been out there as a possibility. I would be lying if I said I hadn't considered it."

Will the mystery surrounding John Hurt's 'Doctor' finally be unravelled?



“ I ENVY MATT SMITH'S FLUIDITY AND HIS NATURAL SWAGGER, I THINK IT'S BRILLIANT ”
DAVID TENNANT



The Doctors alongside guest star Joanna Page and the latest companion, Jenna-Louise Coleman.



→ **A**H, SPEAKING OF LEAVING... AT THE TIME OF OUR VISIT, RUMOURS WERE STARTING TO EMERGE ABOUT SMITH'S DEPARTURE FROM THE ROLE FOLLOWING THE 50TH anniversary, which wasn't confirmed until some weeks later. An attempt to bring up that possibility was rebuffed, but it's common knowledge that filming *Doctor Who* is as exhausting as it is exciting. Smith's cheeriness remains undiminished, and he's as delightful to chat with as ever, but his trademark bounciness is clearly being saved for the cameras, and perhaps, like Harriet Jones, he's looking a bit tired. He explains that part of the fun of working with Tennant, who occupied the role for a similar length of time, has been working with someone who understands what comes with the role of a lifetime.

"It's been really interesting talking to him and comparing notes, going 'What about this? How did you deal with that?'" he tells us. "It's a very singular, particular journey that not many people really understand. It's like a term of office, because you are a public

figure to some degree, it's something the public are very involved in. It's unexpected to have people dress up as you, it's unexpected to have little figures of you, and it's unexpected to have people coming to watch you film. There's so many things that you can't really share with anyone because it either sounds like you're bragging or moaning. But actually you're just trying to find a context for how to deal with it and how to enjoy it. It's such a dominant thing in your life, I suppose, and that's quite hard to communicate to other people. Someone who knows that, you go 'Wow, it's a lot, isn't it?' The pluses outweigh the minuses tenfold."

"It's been quite interesting to swap notes, less on playing the part and more on the stuff that comes with it, the lifestyle that is inflicted upon you and the good and bad that come with that," agrees Tennant. "Lots of people are known for lots of things, but the particular attention that *Doctor Who* gets is relatively unique, so it's been interesting to share that with Matt. It's been good." ➤



SEE YOU NEXT TIME

Getting multiple Doctors on screen together for an entire adventure is a rare treat indeed...

THE THREE DOCTORS (1972)



The Time Lords begrudgingly break the laws of time, allowing Jon

Petwee's Third to call upon Patrick Troughton's Second to relieve a terrible threat on Gallifrey. Unable to stop bickering, they get William Hartnell's First on screen to deliver some scathing put-downs to the "dandy and a clown."

THE FIVE DOCTORS (1983)



Four of the five incarnations of the Doctor (with Richard Hurndall doubling

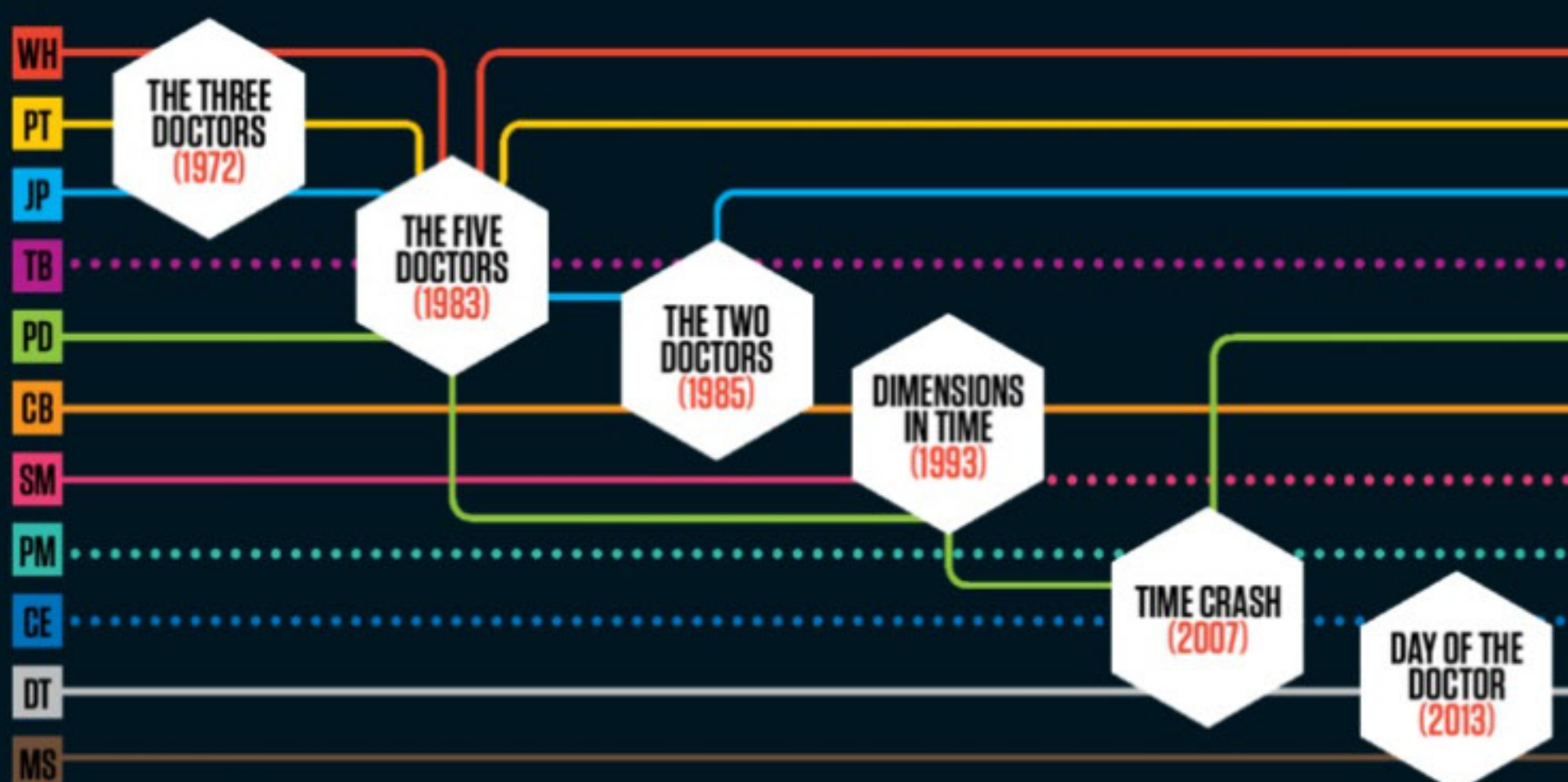
as the First) are scooped up by some nefarious cad and deposited in Gallifrey's Death Zone alongside a pick'n'mix of old companions, monsters and yellow cars. Archive footage of Tom Baker's Fourth is used, and therefore doesn't really count.

THE TWO DOCTORS (1985)



A romp with Troughton's Second Doctor upsets the time stream of Colin Baker's Sixth

Doctor (although apparently not the other four) and he takes time out from throttling Peri (Nichola Bryant) to patronise Jamie (Frazer Hines), save the Second Doctor and secure his own future.

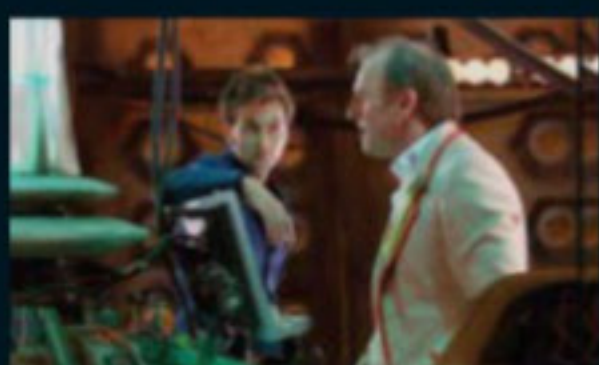


William Hartnell Patrick Troughton Jon Pertwee Tom Baker Peter Davison Colin Baker Sylvester McCoy Paul McGann Christopher Eccleston David Tennant Matt Smith



DIMENSIONS IN TIME (1993)

Eastenders meets *Doctor Who*! In 3D! Three, Four, Five, Six and Seven (Sylvester McCoy) flit in and out of time and mind-link to defeat the Rani and save Albert Square from the only monster costumes the BBC hadn't junked. There was no hope of the show coming back, so we were just grateful for anything. Please forgive us, future generations.



TIME CRASH (2007)

David Tennant's Tenth hangs out with his own IRL father-in-law Peter Davison as the Fifth's TARDIS merges with his in the name of charity. There's some lovely banter and gentle ribbing of Fifth's "decorative vegetable" and "brainy" specs, proving that when *Doctor Who* gazes at its own mythological navel it doesn't always have to be a slog.



DAY OF THE DOCTOR (2013)

The Tenth, the 11th (Matt Smith) and a mysterious maybe-Ninth (John Hurt) team up for this forthcoming 50th romp...

➤ While the memories of living with *Doctor Who* may have been fresh in his memory, Tennant tells us that rediscovering the character of the Tenth Doctor took a bit more work than getting into costume and saying "Allons-y!"

"There is something in the tone of *Doctor Who* and the character as well that I was finding a little elusive," he remembers. "I was reading the script and I was trying to learn the lines and imagine it, and I had to go and get a couple of DVDs out and rewatch it. It's something about the energy of it, because it's not naturalistic in the way that most things are. It's got an absolute reality to it, but the tone of *Doctor Who* is not like anything else. It's been a lovely thing to revisit because once you're in it, it feels very comforting and familiar."

Fan speculation about who would be involved in the 50th Special was clarified when Christopher Eccleston declined to return, and we wondered if Tennant had any reservations. "You don't know quite how you're going to feel about it," he admits. "And you never entirely know if it's wise

“JUST SEEING THE COSTUMES NEXT TO EACH OTHER, SEEING THE CONVERSE AND THE BOW TIE... IT'S KIND OF COOL”
MATT SMITH



to go back to anything. But with *Doctor Who* there has always been the precedent, so I guess it was always there as a possibility. It's not like I'm doing a season; it's very much a lovely thing to revisit for a handful of filming days, and something that I still feel very fondly about. I had a very wonderful, happy time here, so it's no great trial to have another wee go."

TENNANT MAY HAVE BEEN EXCITED TO RETURN BUT, WITH TWO DOCTORS IN THE TARDIS, WE COULDN'T HELP BUT ASK SMITH IF HE GOT A LITTLE PROPRIETORIAL ABOUT

the old girl. "Ha! No, although I did say to David on the first day, because we were doing a scene in my TARDIS, 'I don't want to hog the flying duties, so if you want to, fly away!'"

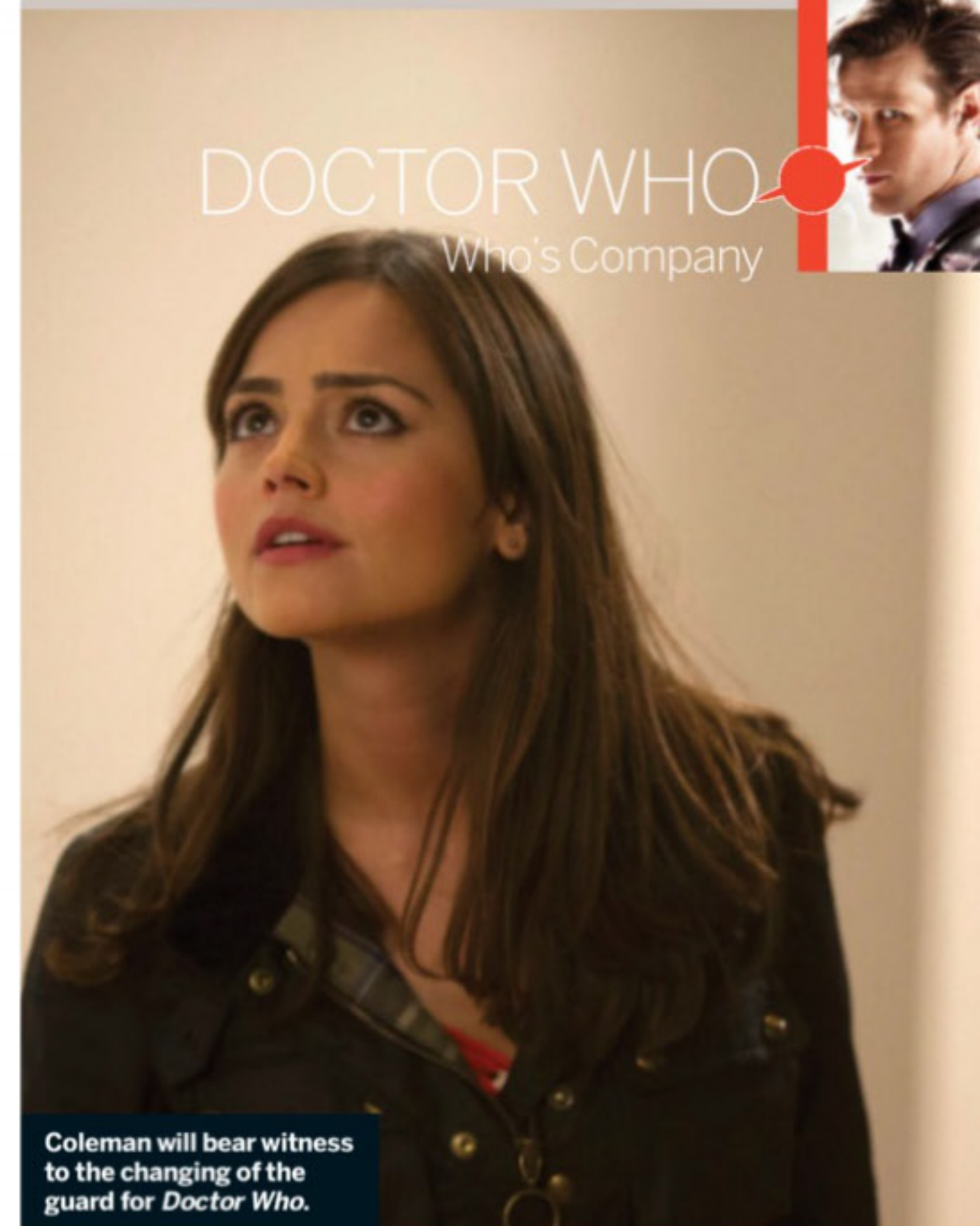
"His TARDIS is beautiful, have you been on it?" asks Tennant, which we confirm, leaving out the bit about the lever. "It's a beautiful set, very different to mine so I don't feel like they compete. It's much more robust. The one I was on was a kind of organic thing, like it was growing, whereas Matt's has lots of fantastic switches, there's

lots of levers to slam. His TARDIS is my TARDIS," he jokes. "It's all one TARDIS, it's all one Doctor at heart." There is, however, some obligatory commentary on the respective size of their sonic screwdrivers. "Mine's bigger," confirms Smith. "I win... on that one." "His is much bigger!" laughs Tennant. "Everyone's since 1963 is bigger than mine! Well, maybe I just don't have to compensate so much; maybe I'm very happy with my sonic's length. And it does everything that it needs to do."

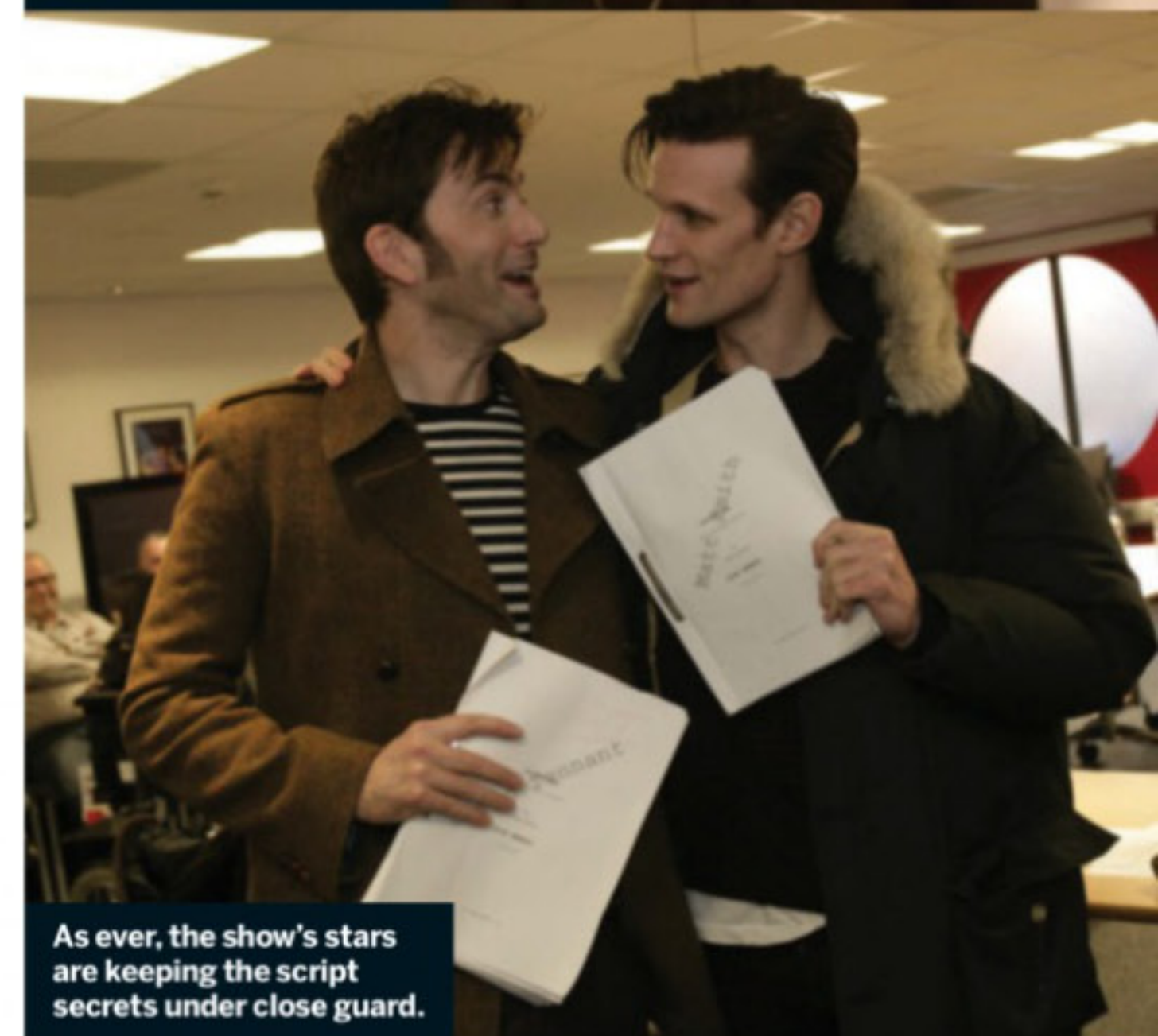
Leaving the question of whether size matters aside, what is very clear from speaking to the two actors is a colossal mutual respect. "It's his gig," emphasises Tennant. "I'm a guest on his show, so it was down to him to be OK about it, which mercifully he was. I was slightly nervous, although I talked to Matt and he was very enthusiastic about the whole notion of it happening. I don't think he's grown [into the role], I think he hit the ground knowing what he was doing. He's got such a feel for it and such a flair about him. I envy his fluidity and his natural swagger, I think it's brilliant."



Tennant has no qualms about returning to the show.



Coleman will bear witness to the changing of the guard for *Doctor Who*.



As ever, the show's stars are keeping the script secrets under close guard.



Tennant's praise for Smith's interpretation immediately conjures the image of the two Doctors standing next to each other, and seeing how they differ is one of the most exciting prospects of the 50th. "David's is more swashbuckling than mine," opines Smith. "With girls, for instance, they react very differently. Mine's like 'You're a weirdo,' and David's is like 'Hey!' They're slightly different men and we've approached it in different ways, but they're the same man. That's the great thing about seeing them on screen, you go 'You're the same, but you're different, but you're the same!'"

THAT UNIQUE MIXTURE OF SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE THAT DEFINES THE DOCTOR'S TRANSFORMATIONS COULD ALSO BE USED TO DESCRIBE THE EVOLUTION OF THE

show itself, as Tennant explains. "It's a very different show to when I was in it; it's also the same show that it was in 1963," he tells us. "And I think that's one of the reasons it's still going. That central alchemical thing that works is still there. I think if you showed this show to someone who was watching... maybe not this show, because they wouldn't

understand why there was more than one Doctor, but if you showed Matt's next episode to someone who was watching in 1963, they'd be a bit confused, but they'd know it was the same show. At heart it's the same principle. And I think that's true for the actors within it as well; the joy of it remains the same."

That joy that Tennant refers to is evident as we make our way out of the BBC Centre and spot Page and her husband taking a picture with their new baby daughter and a Dalek in the lobby. "She's had photos with the TARDIS and the monster," Page exclaims. "And she's got this lovely white snow suit which has got slime all over it because I gave her to one of the monsters and said 'Can you look like you're going to eat her?' So he did and he slimed all over her, so it's just really great!"

"It's really cool!" concludes Tennant. "It's really cool to be in *Doctor Who* acting opposite the Doctor! It sounds ludicrous, but it's true." ✍

The *Doctor Who* 50th Anniversary Special will air on BBC One on 23 November.

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Our thoughts on the pick
of the entertainment
releases out this month

★★★★★ Outstanding ★★★★★ Thoroughly entertaining ★★★ Good but somewhat lacking ★★ Fair at best ★ Avoid as you should *After Earth*

GRAVITY 76

"BREATHTAKINGLY BEAUTIFUL,
GRAVITY IS A TRIUMPH"

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see now!

TRIVIA ROBERT DOWNEY JR WAS ORIGINALLY CAST IN GEORGE CLOONEY'S ROLE IN *GRAVITY*, BUT WAS FORCED TO DROP OUT DUE TO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS.

FILM INFO

Released

8 November

Certificate

12A

Director

Alfonso Cuarón

Screenwriters

Alfonso Cuarón,

Jonás Cuarón

Cast

George Clooney,

Sandra Bullock

Distributor

Warner Bros

Running Time

91 minutes



SciFiNow
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see now!

GRAVITY

Failure is not an option



LOST IN SPACE

Cinematic space missions gone wrong



Apollo 13 (1995)

"Houston, we have a problem." Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon and Bill Paxton undertake NASA's doomed 1970 lunar mission. When disaster strikes, dreams of moonwalking are abandoned in the struggle to get home.

Alien (1979)

"In space, no one can hear you scream." Ridley Scott raised the benchmark as the crew of a spaceship are terrorised.

Moon (2009)

"I hope life on Earth is everything you remember it to be." An astronaut miner makes an ominous discovery in this psychological drama.

Sunshine (2007)

"Eight astronauts strapped to the back of a bomb." A crew of astronauts attempt to reignite the sun and soon begin to struggle for sanity.

"Life in space is impossible."

So Alfonso Cuarón tells us explicitly at the very beginning of *Gravity*. It's right there, in big fat white letters on the screen along with some statistics. Translation? Cuarón's characters are doomed before we even meet them.

But what a way to meet them. In a 17-minute, unbroken opening shot, the camera sweeps effortlessly across star-speckled nothingness, giving us a majestic view of our beautiful planet in all its gigantic blue and green glory before finally settling on a group of astronauts working on a satellite. It's as beautiful as anything we've ever seen on the silver screen.

Among the group is veteran commander and country music fan Matt Kowalsky (George Clooney), completing his final expedition for NASA and determined to break the spacewalk record before returning to terra firma. He's cool, calm and collected, in stark contrast to his companion, Dr Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock), a medical engineer on her first mission who hasn't quite got the hang of this whole astronaut malarkey yet.

Quite what they're there to achieve is beside the point – research, or something. But it's entirely irrelevant, because before long mission-ruining debris from a satellite is heading their way. Fast.

As chunks of metal rip across the screen and head toward us at an alarming rate, our heroes are thrust into a terrifying tailspin. Thanks to

Cuarón's clever direction and use of 3D, we're sent flying along with them. Spinning across space we go, feeling the lack of gravity as a white-suited Stone disappears into the distant black and Kowalsky desperately tries to gain control of his jetpack. The camera is constantly moving, making us as disorientated as the characters on screen and moving us to feel their terror and panic. They think they're going to die – and so do we.

And here is the genuine genius of *Gravity*. From the opening scene, all bets are off. Hollywood tropes are thrown out of the window, replaced with an intense thrill-ride of a plot that keeps us guessing from beginning to end. For now, though, Kowalsky is still resolutely calm, while Stone is less so and running out of oxygen. But on discovering that their space shuttle has been destroyed, and with Houston as silent as the void that surrounds them, they must find a way to get home. Luckily, there's a disused Russian space station just within reach. But don't imagine for a second that it's going to be that easy.

"I hate space," mutters Stone after almost dying for perhaps the umpteenth time, and well she might. Cuarón, however, clearly doesn't. *Gravity* is a love letter to the cosmos. There are gorgeous vistas of Earth

throughout. We see the sun rise and we see it set, giving way to a mind-blowing glimpse at the Aurora Borealis from above. It's spine-tingling stuff, and ultimately the real star of this movie. The vast emptiness of what lies beyond the planet, meanwhile, is just as beautiful – but there's something terrifying among the twinkling stars, and it's the thing our heroes fear: an inevitable, cold and lonely death.

That fear is particularly palpable in Bullock's performance. She's the rookie on a mission gone wrong, so we can understand her fright, but thankfully just before the panic and screaming becomes too much to bear, Stone finds her resolve and the Oscar-winning actress begins to shine. Many would struggle to meet the demands of this role, but it's in safe hands as Bullock gives us powerful emotion, only occasionally crossing the line into cloying territory.

Frequently ridiculous but breathtakingly beautiful, *Gravity* is a triumph. Just sit back and enjoy the view.

Cat Collins

VERDICT ★★★★★

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



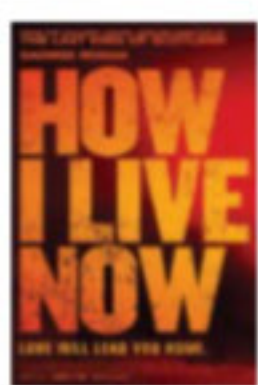
Children Of Men

Humankind faces extinction in Cuarón's thought-provoking 2006 dystopian drama, starring Clive Owen and Julianne Moore.



HOW I LIVE NOW World War III in the English countryside

Details 15 // 101 mins // Out now **Director** Kevin Macdonald **Screenwriters** Jeremy Brock, Tony Grisoni, Penelope Skinner, Jack Thorne **Cast** Saoirse Ronan, George MacKay, Harley Bird, Tom Holland, Danny McEvoy **Distributor** Magnolia Pictures



Young Irish actress

Saoirse Ronan is excellent, as usual, in *How I Live Now*, based on Meg Rosoff's young adult novel. Sadly, she's more convincing than the film itself, in which she plays Daisy, a sullen 16-year-old American girl sent to England to live with her aunt and cousins in their idyllic rural property. She starts by fighting off their good spirits and polite welcomes, refusing to have fun. She is even rude to her cousin Edmond (George MacKay), despite their obvious mutual attraction. You can assume that, as with all such movies, she will eventually soften and become a more contented person, madly in love with Edmond.

And you'd be right. As it turns out, this turnaround happens rather quickly, allowing us to shift to the real action. This isn't just a coming-of-age drama, or it wouldn't be in this magazine. Daisy's Aunt Penn (a cameo by Anna Chancellor), working on delicate peace negotiations, flies urgently to Geneva, arranging for someone else to take care

of them. This person never shows up, however, as *World War III* suddenly begins. Presumably Aunt Penn didn't do so well.

Before long, Britain is under martial law, with the kids taken from their happy existence and forced to work for the war effort. Originally a cheery teen drama, it becomes a dystopian tale with terrorist attacks and mounds of corpses.

In case you are still not convinced of its sci-fi credentials (and while it is certainly speculative fiction, it all seems chillingly plausible), it is also established in early scenes that Daisy and Edmond communicate via telepathy. Even when they are separated by the war, Daisy still knows where to find her true love, and will walk across Britain to be with him, with her younger cousin Piper (Harley Bird), in tow.

Despite the telepathy-filled teen *Children Of Men* vibes, it's the first part of the film – the family tale between the moody Yank and the relentlessly cheerful Brits – that is most convincing. It is only once *World War III* starts that everything starts to go downhill – for both the characters and the audience.

Mark Juddery

FILM ★★☆☆☆

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



The Hunger Games
Another gifted young actress heads towards the big leagues in a dystopian future.



WE ARE WHAT WE ARE

Dinner is served

Details 15 // 105 mins // 25 October **Director** Jim Mickle **Screenwriters** Nick Damici, Jim Mickle **Cast** Julia Garner, Ambyr Childers, Bill Sage, Michael Parks **Distributor** Entertainment One



"Takes more than a flood to bring this family to its knees," intones fearsome paterfamilias Frank Parker (Bill Sage). In this waterlogged southern gothic, tradition is as important as the meat in the pot.

When their mother dies suddenly, Iris (Ambyr Childers) and Rose (Julia Garner) are left with the responsibility of preparing the family's annual ceremonial meal. As the two discuss their options, Doc Barrow (Michael Parks) makes a disturbing discovery: a bone that appears to be human.

Jim Mickle and Nick Damici preserve the conflicts of the original film while making this their own. This remake embraces its American identity; the setting and characters feel fresh despite the similarities. It's a modern Depression-era fable that slots into classic gothic territory.

The performances are outstanding. Childers and Garner

walk the line between girls next door and something else superbly, with Garner in particular proving to be a talent to be reckoned with. Meanwhile, Sage gives Frank surprising moments of warmth and humour that don't make him any less threatening, and Kelly McGillis pops up as their kindly neighbour. The standout, however, is Parks, who is heartbreaking as the grieving father who wonders if he might have found out what happened to his missing daughter, and if he wants to know.

We Are What We Are sidesteps the usual charges levelled at remakes, establishing its own identity. Its horror stems from the lyrical, literary tradition of the dustbowl and people being torn out from their homes by the roots. There are shocking moments, but these are held back as Mickle establishes his subdued atmosphere and the humanity of his 'monsters'. The question isn't whether or not this is as good as the original, but rather whether it's better.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



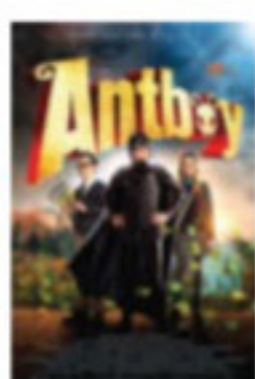
Ravenous

Christian imagery and dark humour abound in this cannibal western with Guy Pearce and Robert Carlyle.



ANTBOY Denmark's favourite pre-teen superhero

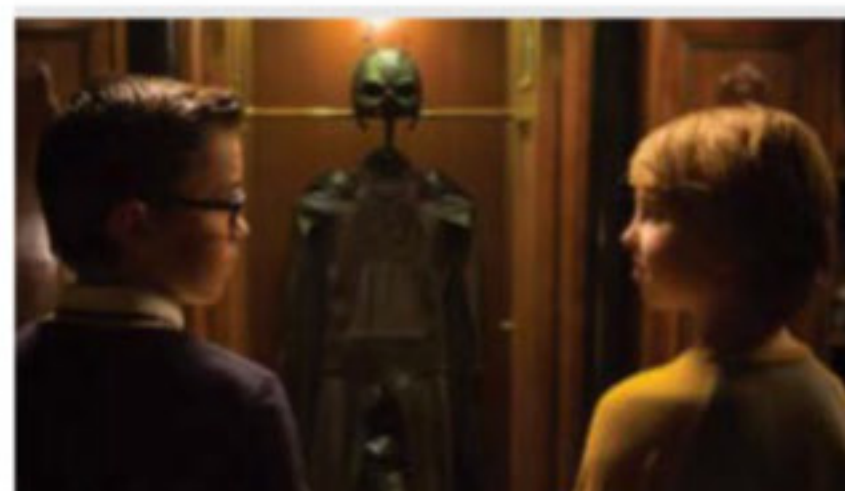
Details TBC // 77 mins // TBC **Director** Ask Hasselbalch **Screenwriters** Anders Ølholm, Torbjørn Rafn, Nikolaj Arcel **Cast** Oscar Dietz, Nicolas Bro, Samuel Ting Graf, Amalie Kruse Jensen, Cecilie Alstrup Tarp **Distributor** Attraction Distribution



As thousands of comic-books, movies, television shows, advertisements and songs have proven over the decades,

superheroes are easy to parody. The numerous superhero tropes are an easy target, partly because they are so obviously ridiculous. Indeed, it is far more impressive that the angst-ridden *Spider-Man* and *Batman* movies (not to mention comics like *Watchmen*) have been taken so seriously.

The Danish movie *Antboy*, one of the latest, is for the most part a *Spider-Man* pastiche. Pelle (Oscar Dietz) is 12 years old – slightly younger than Peter Parker when he was bitten by a GM spider. He looks even smaller and younger than most kids his age, and in his costume he is even more harmless-looking than Chloë Grace Moretz's *Hit-Girl*. While not as lethal as the latter, however, he's no slouch in the villain-fighting world since he was bitten by a laboratory ant, giving him the proportionate powers of an ant, including super-strength, super-smell and corrosive urine (because why not?).



He soon stars fighting crime with the help of his classmate Wilhelm (Samuel Ting Graf), a bespectacled genius and comic-book geek – more like a younger Parker, but he has to make do with being a sidekick. Antboy's arch-enemy, the Flea (Nicolas Bro, who you might recognise from *The Killing II*), is a genius with a terrible costume and the proportionate power of... well, you can probably guess.

Of course, all of this is straight from the Marvel playbook. One touchstone is Ant-Man, one of their earliest superheroes, although perhaps luckily for *Antboy* the founding Avenger failed to make the roll call in *Avengers Assemble*, and the Edgar Wright-directed adaptation is not due till 2015. He is briefly mentioned, however, indicating that this is a movie that's not afraid to disguise its lack of originality.

Still, it has the innocent charm with which Danish cinema has portrayed children since Lasse Hallström's 1985 hit *My Life As A Dog*. *Antboy* might be a *Spider-Man* clone, but he's *their* *Spider-Man*. Marvel is undeniably cool, but rarely have they been this charming.

Mark Juddery
FILM ★★★★★

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Spider-Man
Not as twee as *Antboy*, but when all is said and done, it really isn't all that different.



THE HAUNTING IN CONNECTICUT 2: GHOSTS OF GEORGIA Clichéd creepiness

Details 15 // 101 mins // 31 October **Director** Tom Elkins **Screenwriter** David Coggeshall **Cast** Abigail Spencer, Chad Michael Murray, Katee Sackhoff, Emily Alyn Lind, Grant James **Distributor** Lionsgate



It can't be easy being an estate agent. Haunted house movies are everywhere, all following the same

formula: a family moves into their dream house, only to find it infested with evil spirits. *The Haunting In Connecticut 2: Ghosts Of Georgia* is the latest in a long line of movies seemingly designed to put you off relocating.

All the women in the Wyrick family – mum Lisa (Abigail Spencer), daughter Heidi (Emily Alyn Lind) and aunt Joyce (Katee Sackhoff) – have the dubious gift of being able to communicate with the dead, so when they move into a creepy old house, all of the lurking nasties come out to play. While Lisa medicates her visions away, Joyce encourages Heidi to embrace hers, and soon the little girl finds herself being hounded by all sorts of restless spirits.

Though dad Andy (Chad Michael Murray) is mostly irrelevant to the plot, he gets all the best lines, and it's refreshing to see a character in a horror movie who believes in the

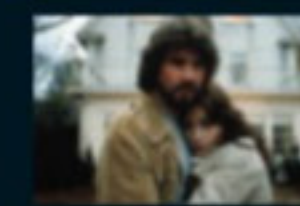
supernatural, even if he can't see it. All the groundwork for a solid (albeit generic) chiller is laid early on, only to be abandoned in favour of a needlessly complicated story about taxidermy, buried treasure and the Underground Railroad. Despite stopping just short of outright racism, the subplot about a pair of missing slaves feels distinctly exploitative.

Worse, it takes a cavalier attitude to mental illness. In both cases, it feels like it's got something to say – it's on the tip of its tongue, it'll get there in a minute if you bear with it... but no, it never quite finds its voice.

The best you could say for this is that it demonstrates the importance of getting a proper survey done before buying an old house. Maybe it's not all bad news for the real estate industry after all...

Sarah Dobbs
FILM ★★☆☆☆

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



The Amityville Horror
The original 'true' haunted house movie (although the 'facts' behind the film have been called into question).

FILM INFO

Released

TBC 2014

Certificate

TBC

Director

Alexandre Aja

Screenwriter

Keith Bunin

Cast

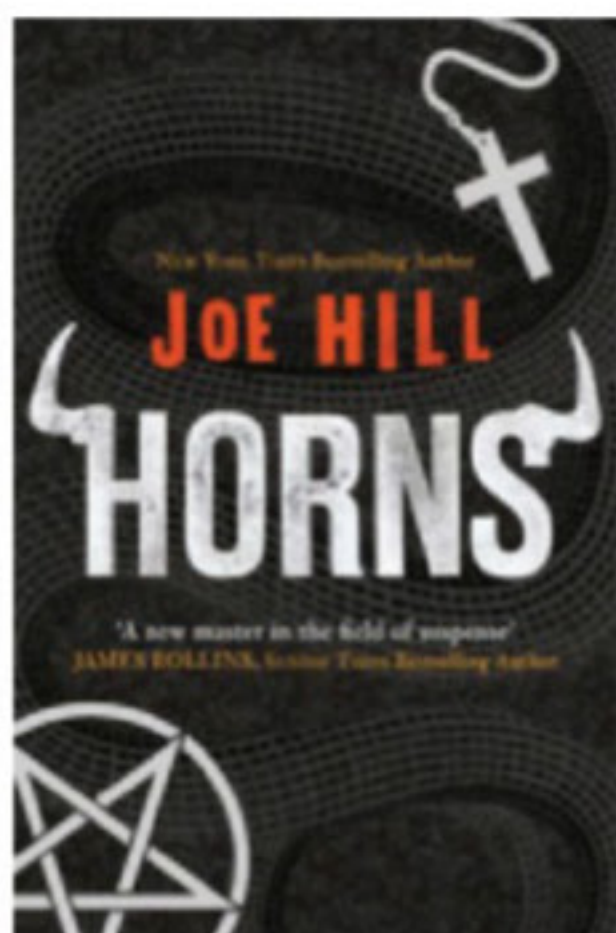
Daniel Radcliffe, Juno Temple, Max Minghella, Joe Anderson, Kelli Garner

Distributor

TBC

Running Time

123 mins



Can the kids watch it?

It's time to tell them that, while Santa really exists, Harry Potter was just an actor – and he's doing grown-up things now. They might be disturbed to see him turning into the devil, though (especially in the later scenes) and, even worse, talking in an American accent.

Is the acting any good?

Mostly yes. Not just Radcliffe, but also Juno Temple, Kelli Garner and especially David Morse as Merrin's long-suffering father. Sadly, the snakes' performances lacked depth.

And the special effects?

Sure, but they are the worst thing about the film – as in, it is at its best when it isn't overtaken by CGI gore, snakes and demons.

Does Heather Graham do anything different?

Sort of. She usually has a heart of gold. Not this time.

HORNS

Daniel Radcliffe turns into the devil... sort of

Daniel Radcliffe's recent career has been very impressive: from a youngster famous exclusively for playing one of the most recognised and highest-grossing characters in the movies, to a high-energy actor who inhabits his new roles so well that you can easily watch him without once thinking 'It's Harry Potter!' The latest evidence was this year's Toronto Film Festival, which showcased three new Radcliffe movies. In *Kill Your Darlings*, he plays a young Allen Ginsberg – and does so well, while *The F Word* sees him as a med-school dropout smitten by a friend. In that film, a definite crowd-pleaser, he's even better.

Then there's *Horns*. This is the latest from French horror movie director Alexandre Aja (*The Hills Have Eyes*), based on the novel by Joe Hill. Though an established horror talent in his own right, there's some traction to be gained in comparing him here to his father – the undisputed king of the chiller, Stephen King. King's work inhabits a secular world in which religion serves little purpose apart from driving people nuts. *Horns*, on the other hand, has a spiritual aspect in which religious symbols have real power – and can indeed save and protect those who use them.

Radcliffe plays Ig, a small-town American guy who is on the run, falsely (but understandably) blamed for the murder of his girlfriend Merrin (Juno Temple), with who he recently experienced a heated break-up. To add to his trouble, he is also inexplicably sprouting a pair of demonic horns.

These horns are unsightly, but they also seem to bring out the worst in everyone he comes near, as they confess their darkest personal secrets to him – usually in a 'too much information' way – and often proceed to act upon them. As you would expect, this provides several moments of dark comedy – notably a clinic receptionist swearing abuse at the more annoying patients and a scrum of reporters beat each other to a pulp in order to get an exclusive interview with Ig – but before long, you find that all the laughs have lulled you into a false sense of security.

Halfway through, it takes a decidedly darker turn, as Ig uses his new demonic powers to discover who killed Merrin. Now the movie lives up to its sinister subject matter, as we discover which characters' dark sides are overshadowed by their morality, and which are simply evil. It all leads to a rather heavy-handed climax, complete with slithering CGI snakes, in which we are reminded of Aja's fondness for gory and brutal violence. It's great if you like that sort of thing, but there's more enjoyment to be found in the twists (as more than a few characters surprise us with their secrets) and the mystery, which – despite Ig's ability to magically pull a confession from any guilty person – is more challenging than you might think.

The other mystery – regarding the horns, and the powers that come with them – are something else. Like the events of classic

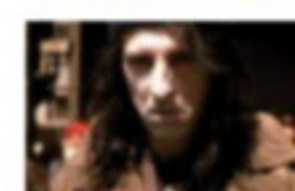
fantasy-comedies like *Big* and *Groundhog Day*, the magic is never explained. But while those movies made some kind of narrative sense (even if they don't make any logical sense), as the heroes were suited to their experiences, *Horns* gives its hero a problem that he doesn't really deserve. As Ig is clearly innocent (and no, that's not a spoiler, as it is obvious early in the film), why is he turning into the devil? As his powers are very useful in his quest for the truth, they become just a little too convenient.



Mark Juddery

VERDICT ★★☆☆

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Prince Of Darkness

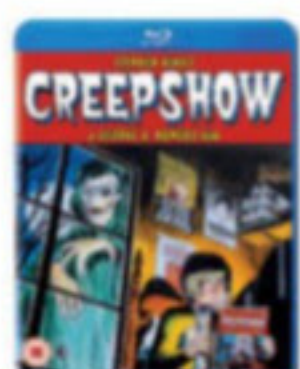
John Carpenter does the person-becomes-bodily-vessel-for-Satan thing. Naturally, he goes a bit further than mere horns.

CREEPSHOW

The madness of King and George



Details 15 // 118 mins // 1982 // £13.87 **Released** 28 October **Director** George A Romero **Cast** Hal Holbrook, Adrienne Barbeau, Leslie Nielsen, Fritz Weaver **Distributor** Second Sight **Extras** Making Of, Commentary, Deleted Scenes, Tom Savini Featurette



By 1982, George A Romero and Stephen King were both at the height of their powers. They probably could have done anything, but

there's a sense of joy to what they chose to do: a big and brash tribute to the EC horror comics of the Fifties.

A more faithful transfer of *Tales Of The Crypt* than Amicus' own 1972 adaptation, Romero and King's *Creepshow* even has its own ersatz Crypt-Keeper – the Creep – leap from a small child (a young Joe Hill)'s discarded comic to introduce a brace of cartoonish morality plays.

With two based on King's published work and three written specifically for the film by the master of fear, it's hard to pick out favourites or weak entries, though King's own turn as a gurning redneck in 'The Lonesome Death Of

Jordy Verrill' is fun, while the monster in 'The Crate' looks like a cheap costume shop gorilla suit compared to the characterful cadavers that FX guru Tom Savini whips up for 'Father's Day' and 'Something To Tide You Over'

Shot and framed like a comic-book even outside the animated segments, with coloured lights and animated effects that echo similar efforts in Wes Craven's *Swamp Thing* and Sam Raimi's *Darkman* to bring a hint of the dot-shaded panel to live action. All the stories are predictable clichés, and the characters broad brush archetypes, but this is part of the intentional high camp of the format, keeping with the macabre melodrama of the comics they're aping.

A sleeper hit on release with a lukewarm critical response, *Creepshow* was ahead of its time. Now everyone is a genre-savvy post-modernist; stylishly and knowingly reworking things



that held them enraptured as kids has formed the career bedrock of Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez, Guillermo del Toro and more. With a HD transfer that makes the best of its demented colour palette, *Creepshow* is ready for an overdue reappraisal.

James Hoare
FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Trick 'R Treat
Michael Dougherty's 2007 cult classic paid tribute to classic Halloween urban legends.



THIS IS THE END

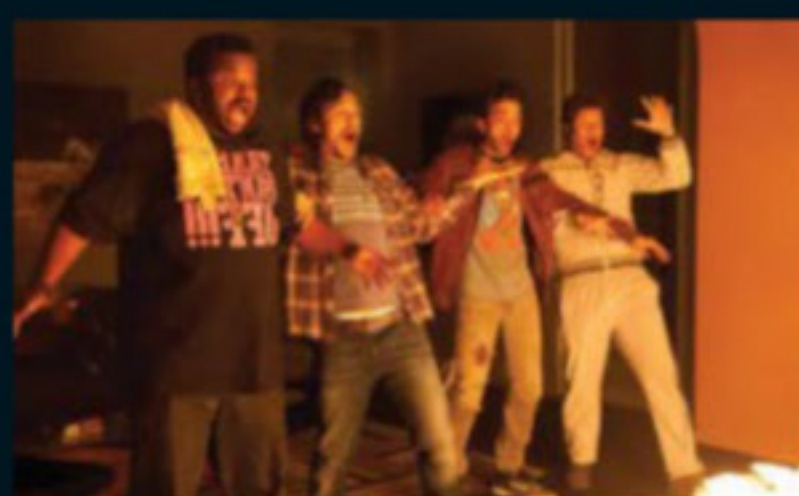
Lovers' spliff

Details 15 // 107 mins // 2013 // £12/£16 **Released** 4 November **Directors** Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen **Cast** Seth Rogen, Jay Baruchel, James Franco **Distributor** Sony Pictures Home Entertainment **Extras** Outtakes, Deleted Scenes, Gag and Bloopers, Confessionals, Featurettes, Original Short Film



Depending on your opinion of Seth Rogen and co's brand of improvisational, weed-inspired comedic output, an entire movie's worth of similarly themed gags will either be an amusing diversion or your worst nightmare. Give it a chance, however, and even the haters may find themselves having fun.

Seeing a bunch of Hollywood's foremost funnymen (and Michael Cera) send themselves up as a party at James Franco's crib gives way to the end of days, *This Is The End* thankfully has more to it than just a means for a bunch of mates to make a movie together – although the sheer number of in-jokes does lend itself to that vibe. Sure, there are pot and dick jokes aplenty, but



the throughline of the central plot is a surprisingly sensitive portrayal of enduring friendship. This is sometimes lost in the sheer volume of – mostly funny – set pieces, but always picks up in time to ensure the substance remains throughout.

This Is The End goes beyond its thin premise to be by turns hilarious and genuinely touching. Plus, it has the best sing-along ending to a film ever. Fact.

Steve Wright
FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

ALL SUPERHEROES MUST DIE

X-Men: First Slash

Details 15 // 78 mins // 2011 // £9.54/£11.04 **Released** Out now **Director** Jason Trost **Cast** Jason Trost, Lucas Till, Sophie Merkley, James Remar **Distributor** Monster Pictures **Extras** Introduction, Q&A, Short Films



The buzz hasn't been kind to indie superhero movie *All Superheroes Must Die*. It's a crude and confrontational

mixture of *Saw*-style sadism and micro-budget superdickery.

The young cast aren't hugely convincing as a team of teen heroes grown apart. The world of *Super, Defendor* and *Kick-Ass* was one in which superheroes didn't exist until the protagonists became them, and all their unimpressive dowdiness reinforced the view that what they were doing was absurd. *All Superheroes Must Die*, on the other hand, is built up as an equal to Marvel – in both casting and budget terms, this is punching well above the movie's weight.



Saw, from which *All Superheroes Must Die* cribs its central conceit, let rays of hope shine through before dashing them cruelly, not by the arbitrary whims of a tormentor, but by decisions the protagonists made. It's a lesson director/writer/actor Jason Trost should have perhaps heeded. Instead, everything the not-so-superheroes do is obviously doomed from the outset, and with it goes all the drama and tension.

James Hoare
FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★



HALLOWEEN: 35TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

The day HD came home

Details 18 // 93 mins // 1978 // **DVD** // £14.27 **Released** Out Now **Director** John Carpenter **Cast** Jamie Lee Curtis, Donald Pleasence, PJ Soles, Kyle Richards **Extras** Commentary, Convention Featurette, Location Featurette, Trailers



Before John Carpenter's

Halloween were plenty of movies we would now recognise as slashers, from

voyeuristic giallos like *Twist Of The Death Nerve* and early thrillers like *Psycho*, to red-raw proto-slashers like *The Last House On The Left* and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, but after *Halloween* there were only slasher films. Good films can influence or inspire, but only the truly remarkable can codify an entire genre.

Masterful in his use of sound and suspense, John Carpenter's genius is in his use of empty space, the shots of hedge rows where the only psychopath is in the viewer's imagination. It's a trick he uses for violence too, with shadows masking the suffering and precise movements from Nick Castle's Michael Myers allowing darker scenes to play out in the mind's eye.

So potent is this direction that very little actual slashing and sadism



goes down in *Halloween*, certainly compared to later films in the series. Instead, *Halloween* draws you into the world of Laurie Strode (Jamie Lee Curtis), and sells you on her growing terror as a spot of autumnal babysitting turns into a claret-caked massacre. Strode survives less because she's the virginal Final Girl – that's a trope which would lurch after her, propagated by imitators – and more because she's the audience's eyes and ears, distinct enough to care about but vanilla enough to imprint onto. In that respect, *Halloween* is nothing more than a grisly fairy tale, with a Big Bad Wolf tearing into the unprepared.

This HD transfer is far more faithful to the cinematic release than the 2007 Blu-ray. Supervised by original cinematographer Dean Cundey, it restores the muted tones of the original, and coupled with an engaging new commentary with Curtis and Carpenter makes the 35th Anniversary Edition a worthy tribute to the slasher progenitor.

James Hoare

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Black Christmas

Arguably the first slasher movie, this 1974 gem cries out for a Region 2 Blu-ray release.

TWIXT

Ghosts of authors past

Details 15 // 86 mins // 2011 // **DVD** // £12.99 **Released** 28 October **Director** Francis Ford Coppola **Cast** Val Kilmer, Bruce Dern, Elle Fanning, Ben Chaplin **Distributor** Metrodome **Extras** None



When "bargain

basement Stephen King" Hall Baltimore (Val Kilmer) is dragged into a murder investigation

by a small-town Sheriff (Bruce Dern), he meets V (Elle Fanning) and Edgar Allan Poe (Ben Chaplin) in a dream and becomes embroiled in a strange mystery.

Twixt is best viewed either as an experiment from a veteran filmmaker or the *Twilight Zone* episode Coppola always wanted to make. Tom Waits takes off-screen Rod Serling duties, and the town's youth-centric panic clearly belongs to the Fifties. Although the dialogue is often clunky and self-conscious, the *Carnival Of Souls*-esque quality of the dream sequences is much more effective.



What's both fascinating and frustrating about *Twixt* is that many of its flaws are part of its appeal. But despite this and the general sense of aimlessness associated with it, there's a real charm to it that stems from Coppola's love of the genre and eagerness to experiment as the film builds towards a predictable but surprisingly moving finale. A treat for cineastes, *Twixt* is a genuine curio that is well worth a look.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

WORLD WAR Z

What is it good for?

Details 15 // 114 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £10/£18 **Released** Out now **Director** Paramount **Cast** Brad Pitt, Mireille Enos, James Badge Dale, Peter Capaldi **Distributor** Paramount **Extras** Featurettes



With grim tales of a

chaotic production and ravenous hordes waiting to tear chunks out of it before it had

got to the screen, it was something of a surprise when Marc Forster's adaptation of Max Brooks' much-loved zombie novel turned out to not be a total disaster.

Anyone hoping for a faithful adaptation should give it a wide berth, however, as Brad Pitt's UN scientist goes on a pathogen-hunting world tour and the most memorable events of the novel are abandoned. Similarly, the much-discussed re-shot ending is a whimper rather than a bang. However, *World War Z* packs some great set pieces into its running time; the attacks on Jerusalem and



Philadelphia are stunning, while a bicycle-bound escape in Korea is nail-biting. On the downside, Pitt is solid rather than spectacular, and a stronger director was clearly needed to provide some backbone.

World War Z has enough ideas and an impressive enough scope to be judged on its own merits. Put any preconceptions to one side and give it a go.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★



SHARKNADO Fin de siècle

Details 15 // 89 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £11/£12.25 **Released** Out now **Director** Anthony C Ferrante **Cast** Tara Reid, Ian Ziering, John Heard, Cassie Scerbo **Distributor** StudioCanal **Extras** Featurette, Trailer



Breaking Twitter in half on its US broadcast, cheapo aquatic shocker *Sharknado* divided the world into two types of

people: those who thought *Sharknado* was crap and were somehow surprised and offended by that, and those who thought it was crap and weren't.

Clearly drawn from the same latter-day-Roger Corman well of big dumb monster movies, Syfy's *Sharknado* simply follows its keenly honed sense of fun first, sacrificing narrative logic on the altar of entertainment.

As a hurricane approaches California, bringing a swarm of sharks with it, the inhabitants of a pier-front bar must survive the perfunctory CG devastation and unconvincing weather effects (everyone dries off rather quickly) to retrieve the bar owner (Ian Ziering)'s son, daughter and prickly ex-wife (Tara Reid). Eventually, they can run no more, and must take a stand to halt the oncoming sharknado – chainsawing oncoming sharks in half and batting them out of the sky with shotgun blasts.

Yes, it's crap, but it's a film you'd be more inclined to re-watch than any number of lumpen big-budget blockbusters to also have come out the same year. Obviously, mockery is justified – encouraged even, and it's tough to imagine that it's not part of

the fun. Why else cast *American Pie*'s Reid, *Home Alone*'s surprisingly game John Heard or *Beverly Hills 90210*'s aging heart-throb Ziering other than for the amusement of cynical 20/30-somethings, guffawing through their Just Eat order and live-tweeting jokes about the water-resistant properties of lip-gloss?

Standing absolutely no chance of achieving the scale of destruction they wish to depict, there's nonetheless a fairly impressive shot of a runaway ferris wheel rolling into a building, and some briefly convincing physical shark heads that barrel into shot – director Anthony C Ferrante has an eye for a quick thrill, passing the camera over sharks nose-down through windows or popping out of storm drains as he rushes to set up the next big daft set piece.

Calling it 'so bad it's good' would be to do it a disservice; it's obviously bad and instead focuses its resources on doing all it can do to raise a smirk rather than doing so accidentally. If a good film is one that entertains, then *Sharknado* is most definitely it.

James Hoare

FILM ★★☆☆☆ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Shark Night 3D
A Great White Seabastard finds itself lobbed under-arm into the slasher movie template.

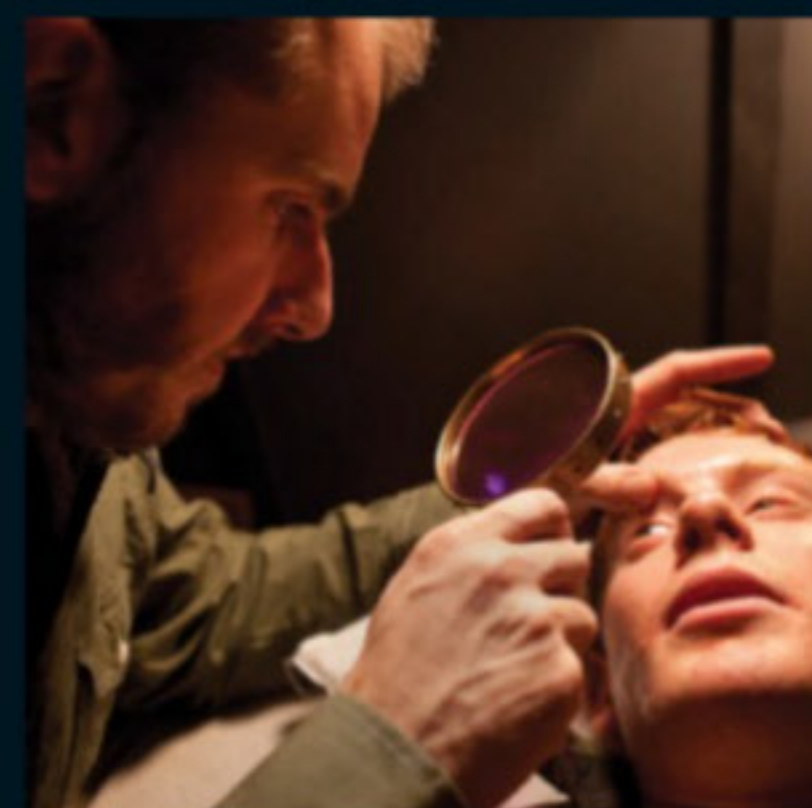
OUTPOST 11 Three men and a boiler

Details 15 // 92 mins // 2012 // **DVD** // £8/£11.11 **Released** Out now **Director** Anthony Woodley **Cast** Luke Healy, Billy Clarke, Joshua Mayes-Cooper **Distributor** 101 Films **Extras** N/A



No relation to the zombie Nazi franchise, *Outpost 11* finds three soldiers in an alternative steampunk past manning a remote Arctic station. When the warning light goes off, each man starts to lose their grip on reality. Can they survive each other? What's going on with those spiders?

There are some promising ideas floating around director Anthony Woodley's feature debut. The setting is intriguing and well-established, and the idea of a boiler taking on god-like significance for the group is decidedly sinister. However, while attention has been paid to the world in which the film takes place (but not to the boom mic), *Outpost 11* is very light on character development. It's hard to care too much as the men lose



their minds, and there's not enough going on plot-wise to compensate, although the final third goes some way towards pulling things back on course before it all goes a bit daft.

This is an interesting but flawed first effort that would have worked better as a short, although Woodley is worth keeping an eye on.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★☆☆☆ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

THE LAST EXORCISM: PART II

The end is the beginning is the end

Details 15 // 88 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £10/£13.50 **Released** Out now **Director** Ed Gass-Donnelly **Cast** Ashley Bell, Julia Garner, Spencer Treat Clark **Distributor** StudioCanal **Extras** Interviews

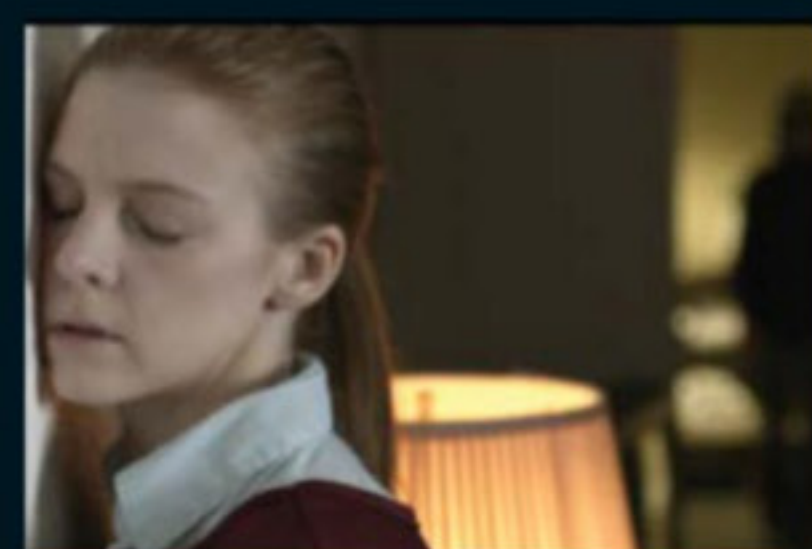


The notion of a sequel to *The Last Exorcism* wasn't particularly appealing given its conclusive ending, but there's a

surprising amount of intelligence in this follow-up, which ditches the found-footage technique for a straightforward possession horror.

Following her brush with Satan, an amnesiac Nell (Ashley Bell) takes up residence in a New Orleans women's shelter. But a piece of the Dark Lord is still inside of her, determined to claim her whole.

Things get off to a very strong start, with Bell's excellent performance keeping us invested during some of the more clunky moments. Her sensitive portrayal of a damaged woman discovering the



world makes the turns into darkness all the more effective. The film suffers a serious dip in the middle as it struggles to fill time before the big finish, but it's worth the wait.

Nowhere near as bad as you may have heard, *The Last Exorcism: Part II* isn't perfect, but Bell is great and there are some genuine surprises. It won't win the series any new fans, but it's definitely worth a look.

James Hoare

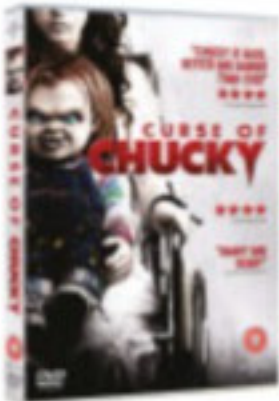
FILM ★★☆☆☆ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

CURSE OF CHUCKY

Hey Jack, Chucky's back



Details 18 // 92 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £8/£12 **Released** Out now **Director** Don Mancini **Cast** Brad Dourif, Fiona Dourif, Danielle Bisutti **Distributor** Universal **Extras** Documentaries, Deleted Scenes, Gag Reel



After descending into full-blown self-parody with 2004's *Seed Of Chucky*, Don Mancini made it clear that *Curse Of Chucky*,

the sixth film in the franchise, would return the killer doll to his horror roots. But no film about a psychotic, foul-mouthed toy can be completely straight-faced, and there's more than enough humour here to make it both a tremendously entertaining horror comedy and a fantastic return to form.

When wheelchair-bound Nica (Fiona Dourif) and her medicated mother receive a Good Guy doll in the mail, things take a turn for the worse, and her sister arrives with her husband, nanny, daughter and priest in tow to help her cope. But grief and mounting debts are nothing compared to what happens when Nica's niece decides that Chucky's her friend to the end. "I don't

know," mutters Nica, "That works on so many levels."

The first half is surprisingly suspenseful given the comic excesses of the last two films, and Mancini establishes not only the tone, but also an increased level of confidence behind the camera. With a *Cluedo*-esque setup and creepy mansion (complete with a dark attic and rickety elevator), he combines humour and chills with a deftness that belies how far into the series we are. He wisely holds off on unleashing Chucky until the characters are drawn well enough for us to decide the order in which we want them to die, at which point Mancini ramps up the chaos with the patter of tiny feet.

Fiona Dourif is excellent in the lead, creating a character to root for. While there are laughs to be had, there are more than a few jump scares littered about the place and Chucky's mean streak marks a welcome return. Fans



of the series will appreciate Mancini's decision to tie it in to the movies' mythology, and Brad Dourif is clearly having the best time. There's no excuse for a film coming so late in the series' cycle to be this much fun, but we're thrilled that it is.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Halloween: H2O

A returning Jamie Lee Curtis and Kevin Williamson script polish worked wonders.



V/H/S/2 Death by video

Details 18 // 96 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £11.74 **Released** Out Now **Directors** Simon Barrett, Adam Wingard, Eduardo Sanchez, Gregg Hale, Gareth Evans, Timo Tjahjanto, Jason Eisener **Cast** Adam Wingard, Jay Saunders, Epy Kusnandar, Hanna Al Rashid **Distributor** Koch Media **Extras** N/A



Following last year's provocative found-footage anthology, *V/H/S/2* is bigger, more ambitious and

more fun than its predecessor, but at the expense of some of the scares.

It's less insidiously creepy but arguably more consistent, aiming squarely at crowd-pleasing fun and hitting its mark. Adam Wingard's nifty bionic eye segment 'Phase I Clinical Trials' has some good shocks, but lacks a strong ending, although Eduardo Sanchez and Gregg Hale's zombie bike ride 'A Ride In The Park' is funny, inventive and surprisingly moving.

Best of the lot is Gareth Evans and Timo Tjahjanto's 'Safe Haven', in which a group of journalists investigating a cult get more



than they bargained for. It's disorientating, relentless, completely mad and scary. Jason Eisener wraps things up with 'Slumber Party Alien Invasion', which has the inspired idea of strapping the camera to a dog, but ultimately it outstays its welcome.

Those who found *V/H/S* dull and/or unpleasant should enjoy this sequel a lot more, but fans of the original might find themselves missing that edge.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★

FRANKENSTEIN'S ARMY

Monster mash

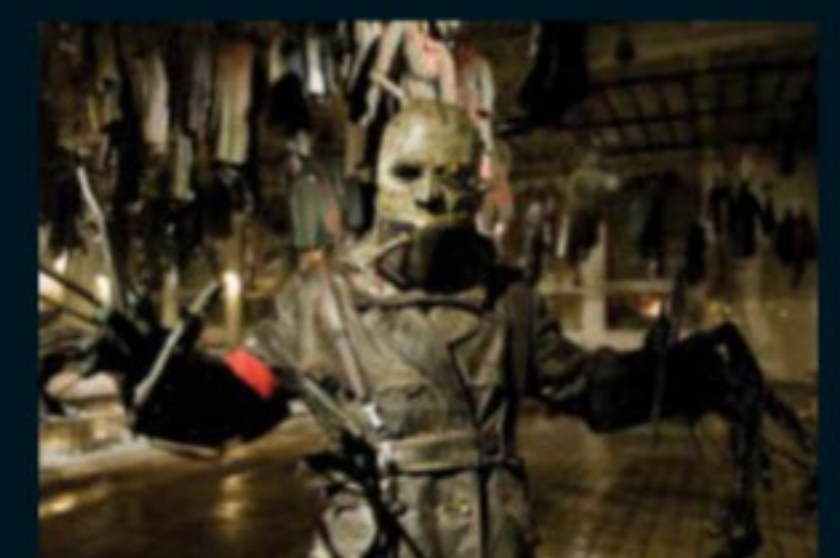
Details 15 // 81 mins // 2013 // **DVD** // £12.99 **Released** Out now **Director** Richard Raaphorst **Cast** Karel Roden, Joshua Sasse, Alexander Mercury, Luke Newberry **Distributor** Entertainment One **Extras** Making Of, Trailer



A small Red Army squad (and their cameraman) stumble across a Nazi underground lab full of abominations that

are half-man, half-machine. Can they make it out alive without ending up on the operating table?

Richard Raaphorst's found-footage horror takes too long to get going, but there's an impressive love and attention to detail that has gone into his creatures. From a walking iron maiden to the gross misuse of a teddy bear, it's the monsters that make the film. There's also a sly sense of political awareness and the futility of conflict, and a scene-stealing performance from genre veteran Karel Roden as the titular creator. That being said, there



are several sequences that drag quite painfully in places, some of the acting is a bit ropey and the found-footage angle only really comes into its own during the chase sequences.

Frankenstein's Army is certainly not a perfect creation, but it boasts some interesting and entertaining parts, and it's a great relief that it doesn't go down the 'comedy' *Iron Sky* route.

Jonathan Hatfull

FILM ★★★★★ **EXTRAS** ★★★★★



Series Seven

DOCTOR WHO

Run you clever boy, and remember

Details 12 // TBC // 2011-13 // £35/£31 **Released** 28 October **Showrunner** Steven Moffat **Cast** Matt Smith, Karen Gillan, Arthur Darvill, Jenna-Louise Coleman **Distributor** Zentertain **Extras** Audio Commentaries, Behind The Scenes Featurettes, The Science Of Doctor Who, Doctor Who At Comic-Con



The series leading up to the show's landmark 50th anniversary celebrations was always going to have a difficult job.

The show said goodbye to beloved characters, set up the mystery of the new companion and dropped John Hurt-sized hints to the future. Talk about an emotional rollercoaster.

And of course, we now know that Series Seven is Matt Smith's final full series. He deserved a good send off, and by and large he got one, with ambitious, blockbuster episodes crammed with plot and action. That said, the condensed plotting of many episodes and the splitting of the series has made the experience a bit jarring.

The first five episodes are bombastic mini standalone genre movies that serve as the Ponds' protracted goodbye. Amy (Karen Gillan) and Rory (Arthur Darvill) run the gamete of emotions from estranged married couple in 'Asylum Of The Daleks' to the heartbreaking 'Angels In Manhattan'.



And then there's Clara (Jenna-Louise Coleman). The Ponds got the tearjerker, but the biggest shock was Coleman's appearance and death in the opener. She got better, however, returning for Christmas special 'The Snowmen' and the final eight episodes, which got increasingly harder to invest in.

As for Clara, it's hard to get a feel for her as a character. The writers haven't quite got enough of a grip on who she is yet to write her well, or at least beyond a deus ex machina plot point.

The ambition of Series Seven is to be applauded. Real-life mother and daughter Diana Rigg and Rachel Stirling in 'The Crimson Horror'? Great. Ice Warriors? Yes please, but the less said about the kids in 'Nightmare In Silver' or 'The Rings Of Akhaten' the better.

The Doctor's 11th incarnation has been surprising and wonderful. Matt made this role his own, and his final series aims for greatness but doesn't always hit the mark. Regardless, nothing can take away from the actor who brought nuance and passion to a well-established character.

Krystal Sim

FILM ★★☆☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Torchwood
Doctor Who spin-off series with a more adult feel, featuring the irrepressible Captain Jack Harkness.



Season Two

GRIMM

Fairy tales have never been so ferocious

Sci-Fi Now
Must see now!

Details 15 // 952 mins // 2012 // £28/£24 **Released** Out now **Creators** David Greenwalt, Jim Kouf, Stephen Carpenter **Cast** David Giuntoli, Russell Hornsby, Silas Weir Mitchell, Bitsie Tulloch, Sasha Roiz, Reggie Lee **Distributor** Universal Pictures **Extras** Deleted Scenes, Gag Reel, Featurettes



Detective Nick Burkhardt (David Giuntoli) returns for a second series of creature catching and crime solving, aided by his weird and wonderful Wesen sidekick Monroe (Silas Weir Mitchell) and police department partner Hank (Russell Hornsby).

The season opens with Nick's beloved Juliette (Bitsie Tulloch) still in a coma thanks to vengeful former Hexenbiest Analind Schade (Claire Coffee), who is out for revenge and goes to extreme lengths to regain her dignity and her powers.

Nick, still reeling from the discovery that his mother did not die in a car crash, as he has believed all his life, allows her to hang around for three episodes and a brief murder spree before bidding her a tearful farewell. Odds on she'll pop up in Season Three!

Nick has a much stronger belief in his Grimm status this time round; he has unintentionally recruited some new followers and finds himself with a bizarre but brilliant posse, all wanting to help protect Portland from the threat of Wesen gone bad. Even Hank, who despite questioning his own sanity has joined the inner circle, and is relieved to learn that

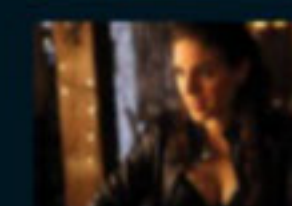
the spate of unnatural situations that they have been investigating can be explained. Monroe remains a wealth of knowledge and hilarious anecdotes as he navigates Nick around each creature he encounters. This time though, Monroe has the added distraction of Rosalee (Bree Turner), whose spice shop becomes the unofficial headquarters and unwelcome sanctuary for confused and desperate Wesen.

There are a number of storylines that continue throughout the season, most notably the gloriously bewildered Juliette, who has an epic journey of discovery and unexplained infatuation to deal with. Nick's scheming boss Renard (Sasha Roiz) continues to manipulate to suit his own ends, yet there is a tasty little treat in store as juicy revelations about his character are sandwiched between the action and his loyalties are truly tested. For those yet to discover the joy of *Grimm*, what are you waiting for?

Claire Nicholls

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Lost Girl
Bo feeds on the sexual energy of humans. Finding out she's not alone, she tries to discover her origins.



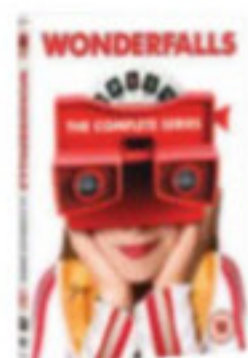
Complete Series

WONDERFALLS

Got me laughing, now it's got me crying



Details 12 // 566 mins // 2004 // **DVD** // £19.56 **Released** 28 October **Creators** Bryan Fuller, Todd Holland **Cast** Caroline Dhavernas, Katie Finneran, Lee Pace, Tracie Thoms **Distributor** Mediumrare Entertainment **Extras** Commentaries, Documentary



Now that Bryan

Fuller's *Hannibal* has been given a second season, we hope that his status as the creator of brilliant but short-

lived series is coming to an end. He left *Dead Like Me* after five episodes due to creative differences, while *Pushing Daisies* made it to two seasons and no further. However, it's the treatment of *Wonderfalls* that still rankles the most among the Fuller faithful. It shone brightly for 13 wonderful episodes before being cruelly cancelled, and the fact that it has only now been made available in the UK nearly ten years after it aired is indicative of the baffling lack of love that the show received.

Jaye Tyler (Caroline Dhavernas) is a sardonic "over-educated and unemployable" 20-something working at a Niagara Falls gift shop and living in a trailer. When said gifts start to not only talk to her, but firmly direct her towards interfering in people's lives ("Get off your ass," insists a plastic flamingo), Jaye's carefully constructed wall of bitterness begins to crumble. From a runaway nun and a formerly obese shut-in to her friends and family, people around Jaye start to feel the benefit of her unwilling good nature.

First-time viewers will notice that *Wonderfalls* is less visually striking than

Pushing Daisies and *Hannibal*, but has stronger roots in the real world. There are outlandish moments, but the whimsy is combined with a sharp sense of humour, which in turn is balanced by a huge heart and a real love for his characters. Jaye's acerbic nature protects her from the mundanity of her existence, but watching her gradually attempt to reconnect with her family is heartwarming stuff, especially as they are beautifully played by William Sadler as her caring father, Diana Scarwid's controlling mother, Katie Finneran as her tightly wound sister and Lee Pace's laid-back PhD student brother. With excellent support from Tracie Thoms as Jaye's best friend and Tyron Leitso as her love interest, the cast is simply perfect.

The downside to watching *Wonderfalls* is doing so in the knowledge that there is so little of it. It's inventive, heartwarming and very, very funny. Its reputation as a cult classic is completely deserved, and this set is a must-have.

Jonathan Hatfull

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Eerie, Indiana

This Joe Dante-produced supernatural series was similarly short-lived and equally brilliant.

DOCTOR WHO: THE TENTH PLANET

The First Doctor's haze of glory

Sci-Fi Now Must see now!

Details PG // 94 mins // 1966 // **DVD** // £13.50 **Released** Out now **Creators** Sydney Newman, Verity Lambert **Cast** William Hartnell, Anneke Wills, Michael Craze, Robert Beatty, David Dodimead **Distributor** Zentertain **Extras** Animated Episode Four, William Hartnell Interview, Making Of, Companion Featurettes



Perhaps along with

'Blink', 1966's 'The Tenth Planet' is one of the best *Doctor Who* stories that the Doctor has little to do with.

Struck with bronchitis part way through filming his final story, William Hartnell's Doctor spends an entire episode conveniently unconscious, and much of what remains either sat down or leaning on things while one of Sixties *Who*'s most sophisticated narratives plays out.

A product of the heavyweight team-up of script editor Gerry Davis and writer Kit Pedler, who was on a mission to inject hard science into *Who*, 'The Tenth Planet' may introduce the Cybermen, but it's scarcely their finest hour. Instead,



the real triumph is in its *Quatermass*-like atmosphere of tension and Cold War paranoia that has more in common with classic Fifties flying saucer movies than anything else, and its prescient social concerns that shows a bleak future for mankind lost to cybernetics and places a black astronaut in orbit decades before the reality.

James Hoare

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

DOCTOR WHO: TERROR OF THE ZYGONS

These a moonster loose about this hoose

Details PG // 92 mins // 1975 // **DVD** // £13.75 **Released** Out now **Creators** Sydney Newman, Verity Lambert **Cast** Tom Baker, Elisabeth Sladen, Ian Marter, Nicholas Courtney, John Levene **Distributor** Zentertain **Extras** Elisabeth Sladen And Tom Baker Interviews, Making Of, Directors Cut, UNIT Documentary



Often capable of

great subtlety, Fourth Doctor Tom Baker is having none of it here as he runs away from a Ray Harryhausen-

style Loch Ness Monster in a sort of Bonnie Scotland torn straight from the lyrics of 1958 hit single *Hoots Mon*, while shape-changing, sucker-headed alien Zygons patiently explain their evil plan to square-jawed companion chap Harry (Ian Marter).

'Terror Of The Zygons' is still very much runs on the Jon Pertwee template: there's ecological concerns (oil platforms under attack and the International Energy Conference), authority figures up to no good



(the Duke of Forgill and his sidekick Caber) and gentle sparring with the Brigadier, but it's a romp, and it's got the Baker/Sladen/Marter dream team (when they first appear, Sarah Jane in the Doctor's hat and Harry in his scarf, it's too lovely for words), so just suck up the silliness and watch it.

James Hoare

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

SciFiNow Vault

TOYS // COLLECTABLES // COOL STUFF



1 SPACESHIP COOKIE CUTTERS

Nothing keeps mid-flight munchies at bay quite like cookies, so bust out these adorable spaceship cookie cutters and carve up retro rockets and pew-pew star fighters. It's either that or go into stasis for the rest of the journey. Get yours from Firebox when you've made up your mind.

www.firebox.com

// £7.99

BEST FOR: BAKING IN SPACE

2 PREDATOR SKULL SET

Ideal accessories for any *Alien* or *Predator* action figure set, this array of ten skull trophies was one of the geekier treats to come out of San Diego Comic-Con. Previously only available packaged with individual figures, this set is super-limited edition, so hunt down yours now from NECA's UK eBay store.

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £17.99

BEST FOR: DIORAMA COMPLETISTS

6 KICK-ASS 2 MASK KEYCHAIN

A theme is clearly developing with NECA UK, but this hefty enamel keychain styled like Hit-Girl's distinctive bob is the last thing many a criminal will see, so make it the last thing your keys see too and get yours from their official eBay shop now!

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £5.99 each

BEST FOR: PROTECTING YOUR KEYS

7 KICK-ASS 2 BADGE SET

Show your allegiance to Justice Forever or the Toxic Mega... er, people, with this set of four officially licensed badges from NECA showing the fearless Kick-Ass, the unstoppable Hit-Girl, the demented Colonel Stars And Stripes and the no-good Mother Fucker.

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £4.50 each

BEST FOR: ACCESSORISING



5 NEON SUPERHERO SIGNS

No comic nut could possibly live without these amazing Superman and Batman neon lights, available right now from geek emporium Red 5. Officially licensed retro designs, why not stick one by your window so you can summon the Man of Steel or Dark Knight detective at the flick of a switch?

www.red5.co.uk

// £39.95 each

BEST FOR: DARKENED BATCAVES

4 KICK-ASS 2 HEROCLIX

Blind packaged and compatible with your existing DC or Marvel ranges – or indeed, suitable just as awesome desktop reminders of R-rated vigilante justice – each booster contains one of 12 possible figures, in our case Mother Russia and the Mother Fucker. Get yours now from NECA's new UK eBay store.

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £3.99 each

BEST FOR: DESKTOP SUPERHEROES

3 KICK-ASS 2/ PACIFIC RIM RUBBER BRACELET

The *Pacific Rim* bracelets are slightly more detailed and expensive, but either way these nifty NECA UK exclusives are the perfect accessories for teens. They can take a bashing too – perfect for prowling the streets at night or wrestling with monsters.

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £3.99/£5.99

BEST FOR: TEEN TITANS

8 PACIFIC RIM DOG TAGS

As (probably) worn by Jaeger pilots, make sure your body can be identified when you're pulled from the shattered wreckage of Cherno Alpha, Gipsy Danger or Striker Eureka after a brutal smackdown with a pan-dimensional thunder lizard. Available exclusively from NECA's UK eBay store.

www.ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk

// £9.99 each

BEST FOR: JAEGER PILOTS

9 ZOMBIE SHOWER GEL

If only the perennially sweaty Rick Grimes had this zombie blood shower gel, eh? Wash off the viscous coating of entrails and innards from a day's zombie bashing with the soapy contents of this transfusion-style resealable bag from geek boutique Firebox.

www.firebox.com

// £5.99

BEST FOR: SURVIVORS

Coming Distractions

More must-have collectables, clothing and outright geek chic

CATSPA W BLADE



Limited to 2,500 and available in high-carbon Damascus steel (the IRL answer to Valyrian steel), this is an officially licensed replica of the dagger used in *Game Of Thrones* Season One to finish off the slumbering Bran Stark. Things didn't go quite according to plan though, and like that blade, this one is now up for grabs!

store.hbouk.com // £245

BLADE RUNNER TEE

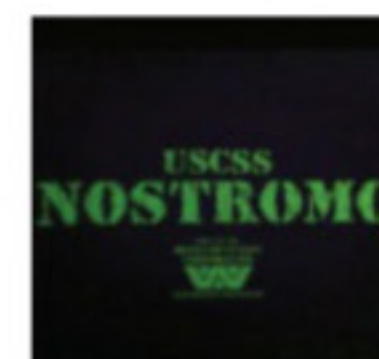


More sophisticated than your average geekware, this subtle design from Nerdoh pays

tribute to the infamous Replicant chop shop in *Blade Runner* and comes with a distressed retro print of black cotton.

www.nerdoh.co.uk // £19

ALIEN T-SHIRT



This lime-green distressed print crew T-shirt from the *Nostromo* is probably

the brightest thing you'll see on that doomed rust-bucket. Sadly, it doesn't glow in the dark, but it wouldn't be a problem if it did – the Xenomorphs use pheromones to hunt anyway.

www.nerdoh.co.uk // £19

HOUND'S HELMET



Available to order soon from the HBO shop, this fibreglass replica of the fearsome helm worn by Sandor Clegane, aka the Hound, is strictly

limited to 2,500 pieces and comes with operable jaws for barking challenges to your opponents.

store.hbouk.com // £275

CLAUSTROPHOBIA

Publisher: Asmodee //
 Players: 2 // RRP: £39.99

With so many dungeon crawlers following a similar fantasy template, it's refreshing to come across one with such a distinctive and different theme. *Claustrophobia* is set in an alternate version of 1634, where you must literally descend into hell in order to claim new land in the name of New Jerusalem.

Designed as a two-player game, *Claustrophobia* sees players either taking on the role of the fanatical Redeemer, a battle cleric leading a band of rag-tag prisoners into the jaws of hell; or a Demon Overlord, who is able to summon up a huge number of troglodyte cannon fodder to stave off the unwelcome intrusion.

The game itself is split into four distinct phases: Initiative and Action phases for the Redeemer, and Threat and Action phases for

the Demon. During the Redeemer's Initiative Phase he rolls a die for each player he controls and assigns them to each player's stat card. Interestingly, the cards show stats for all six faces, which offer differing scores for movement, combat and defence. It's a novel system, which changes at the beginning of each new Initiative Phase. Another neat touch is that as humans get damaged they must forfeit one of their available spaces. If they then assign a die to a used space the player is considered stunned for the rest of the turn.

The Demon player has its own unique board called the Board of Destiny that he uses during his Threat phase. Three Destiny Dice are rolled and applied to various parts of the board, all of which offer bonuses, from increasing movement and defence to summoning additional troglodytes or gaining an additional

2 DESTINY DIE

You'll use these for a variety of purposes, from working out your strategies to using them to deal combat damage. The sheer amount of rolling does mean there's a fair amount of luck involved, but *Claustrophobia* remains surprisingly well balanced.

3 REFERENCE CARDS

This is where you place your die and then work out your player's stats for the turn. The red damage tokens shown here mean those stats are no longer available. Once damage tokens fill all six places the human is killed.

1 ADVANTAGE CARDS

These are distinctive cards that provide useful abilities with which to counteract the demon horde. They range from lamp oil that reduces the number of Destiny Die used, to giving all warriors +1 movement for a turn.

6 DEMON CARD

This represents the demon that will be used in each particular scenario. Sadly, only one (admittedly well-detailed) miniature is supplied, which is one of the game's few disappointments. Each demon can withstand a certain number of wounds before dying.

7 BOARD PIECES

There are various board pieces, allowing for plenty of different layouts. They all sport icons that will explain if a tunnel is flooded, contains an exit or has a booby trap. For the most part, only three warriors can be on any one board piece.

Destiny Die on your next turn. Once he's chosen his strategies, the Action phase is entered and combat and movement begins.

Combat on both sides is extremely simple, with players rolling a number of dice equal to their combat score. There are various additional skills that certain monsters and humans have, but combat for the most part is relatively straightforward. It's further enhanced by the addition of items and event cards that can drastically swing the battle for each.

Although the high reliance on die-rolling will put some gamers off, *Claustrophobia* nevertheless manages to deliver plenty of thrills and spills. The six scenarios are purposely unbalanced (which, again, will annoy some), but we never found the game to be frustrating. It's all rounded off with some exceptionally polished presentation, ranging from excellent painted figures to well-constructed board pieces. All in all, it's an epic spin on the traditional dungeon crawler.

BEST FOR: FANTASY FANS

4 BOARD OF DESTINY

You'll roll three destiny dice at the start of the threat phase and then assign them to parts of the board. Some spaces require specific die combinations, meaning you may have less choice on certain turns depending on what you roll.

4

5

5 MINIATURES

The miniatures used in *Claustrophobia* really are top notch. In addition to being extremely well-detailed, they're surprisingly well-painted too.

TOP FIVE

MAGIC: THE GATHERING GATECRASH



1. DOMRI RADE £19



2. BORIS RECKONER £15



3. OBZEDAT, GHOST COUNCIL £12



4. GODLESS SHRINE £10



5. AURELIA THE WARLEADER £7

Pacific Rim Shuffling The Deck Card Game

Publisher: WizKids // Players: 2-4 // RRP: £7.99

While this doesn't play out like we'd have thought, the end result is a surprisingly fun, fast-paced game. Players take control of two Jaeger pilots with the aim of earning fame by performing heroic feats.



At the beginning of each round a Kaiju attack card is revealed, which

rewards fame based on where the Jaegers are positioned. Players take it in turn to play movement cards (that allow them to move to more advantageous, fame-scoring positions), repair their Jaeger and then guess who is controlling each Jaeger. Guess correctly and you'll steal half that Jaeger's fame points.

One a pilot has been correctly guessed, no other players can choose him to gain any additional fame. As a result, you'll want to let fame build up before attempting to

take it (although this in itself leaves someone to steal those precious points from under your nose). Once the Kaiju attack deck has been exhausted the game ends, and whoever has the most fame wins.

We'd have preferred a game that was a little more combat-based and did a better job of capturing the sheer silliness of the film (we're thinking *King Of Tokyo*), but this remains an extremely polished strategy game at a very reasonable price.

BEST FOR: STRATEGY FANS

Pacific Rim Mini-Game

Publisher: WizKids // Players: 1-2 // RRP: £11.99

We were hoping that this fusion of HeroClix and Guillermo del Toro's monster masher would result in a suitable titanic board game battle (albeit on a much smaller scale of course). Unfortunately, despite the low price tag, there's not a lot here for you to get really excited about.

The game itself consists of a 6 x 16 square grid of durable card that depicts a city for your oversized behemoths to battle in, as well as giving you a pair of dice and several pieces representing fighter jets, military tanks and battleships.

Unfortunately, you're only given two figures to battle with, namely the American Jaeger Gipsy Danger and four-eyed Slatern, which makes games run a little short, particularly as Slatern feels a little more powerful due to its ability to effectively fully heal itself instead of being KO'd. Both figures have a solid range of moves, from Slatern's Triple Tailwhip to Gipsy Danger's ability to get defended by nearby vehicles.

There's just not enough here, though, meaning that you will soon be looking towards other



HeroClix models in order to enhance your game. The figures do integrate well with other those from other sets, but it's a pity that the base pack couldn't have had a little more added to it. Pick it up now from NECA UK at ebay.co.uk/sch/thenecastoreuk.

BEST FOR: HEROCLIX FANS

Expansion Of The Month DESCENT: LABYRINTH OF RUIN

Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games // Players: 1-5
RRP: £49.99



Descent's first big expansion pack is out, and it's a cracker. There are 19 new quests that can be played separately or combined to create an epic campaign that culminates in

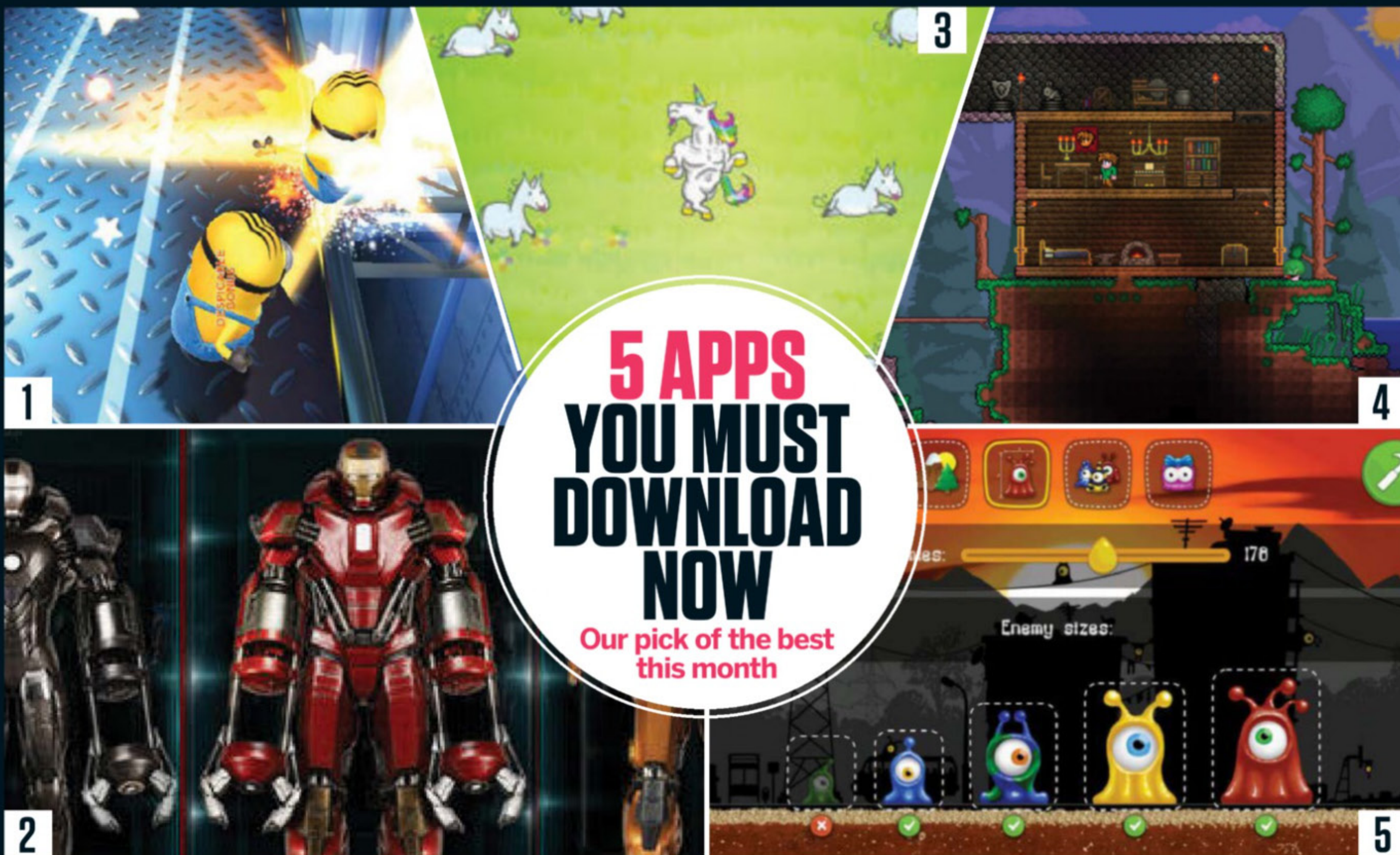
an epic final battle. The Overlord's base deck receives some new cards that are filled with deadly traps, while four new characters are available for the adventurers: Dezza the Vile recovers energy and fatigue points for any adjacent monsters; Logan Lashley cannot be immobilised; Pathfinder Durik can power his way through monsters, while Ulma Grimstone has a better chance of finding potions when searching. It's all rounded off with a huge amount of treasures and allies, a smattering of deadly new monsters and some beautiful-looking figurines.

Do You Remember? DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ALQADIM

1,001 deadly adventures



There have been plenty of different campaign settings since *Dungeons & Dragons* first started in the early Seventies. One of our favourites is the Arabian-themed Al-Qadim, heavily based on Hollywood cinematic adventures of old and *The Tales Of The Arabian Nights*. Set in the land of Zakhara, there's little of the racial issues found in other campaign worlds, allowing the players to get stuck into exploring. There are also a huge number of character kits that greatly expand on the four base classes, while characters can call on 'Fate' to get them out of potential jams (although it should be used with caution, as Fate is fickle). The setting only ran for three years, although it was well-supported during that time due to its popularity.

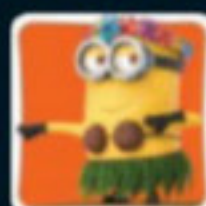


5 APPS YOU MUST DOWNLOAD NOW

Our pick of the best
this month

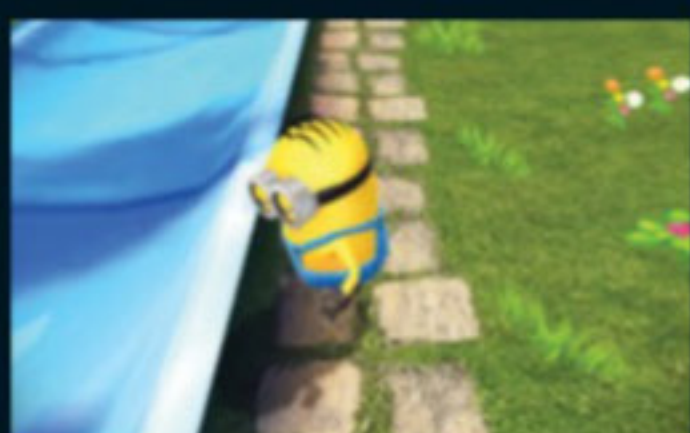
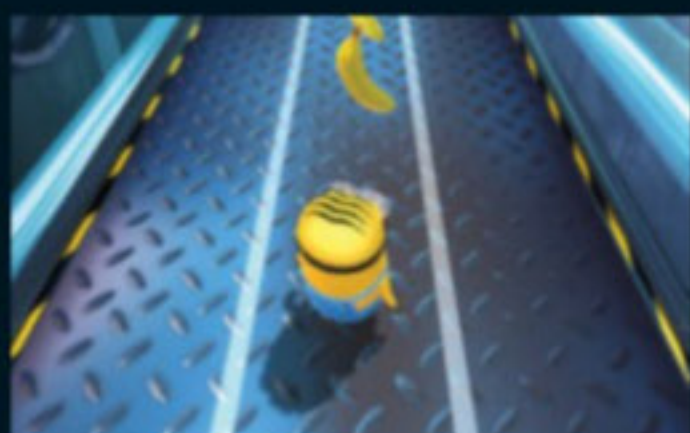
DESPICABLE ME: MINION RUSH

FOR: IOS/ANDROID
PRICE: FREE



1 You know what they say: you're never more than three feet away from an endless running game, but it's a genre that lends itself well to licenses, simply because it would take spectacular effort to do it badly. With beautiful art and level design that plays to the *Despicable Me* franchise's strengths and, of course, lots and lots of brilliant Minions, you can't go far wrong.

BEST FOR: EVIL GENIUSES



JARVIS

FOR: IOS
PRICE: FREE



2 Created by Marvel themselves, Tony Stark's helpful AI can unlock exclusive content and special features contained within the *Iron Man 3* Blu-ray release, as well as function as an alarm clock, post messages to social media platforms and access local weather – all using 20 hours of specially recorded dialogue from actor Paul Bettany. As usual, when Marvel Studios do something, they do it very well indeed.

BEST FOR: TONY STARK



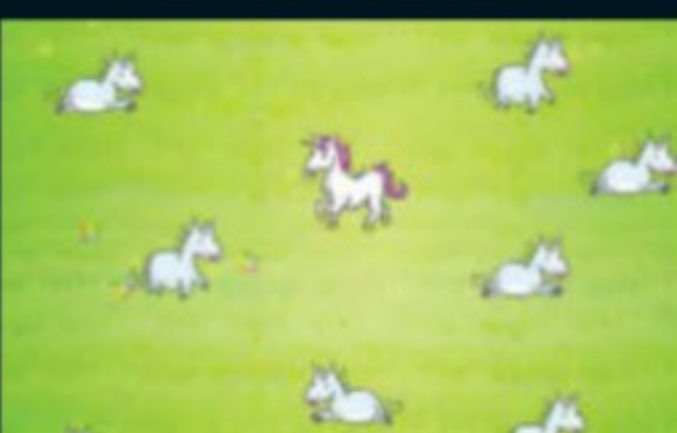
UNICORN EVOLUTION PARTY

FOR: IOS/ANDROID
PRICE: FREE



3 You'd be hard pushed to find a quirkier app than this. The aim of the game is to let your main character merge with fellow unicorns in order to evolve. It's incredibly simple – achieved by tapping on the others to trap them in a bubble and suck them through the unicorn's horn – but it's so cute and strangely addictive. There are 12 evolutions available, which get weirder and uglier every time.

BEST FOR: KILLING TIME



TERRARIA

FOR: IOS
PRICE: £2.99/\$4.99



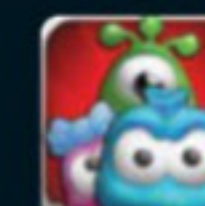
4 Prepare to be pixelated. This nostalgic trip is produced entirely in 16-bit and accompanied by a great soundtrack for adventuring. Like *Minecraft*, the worlds are randomly generated so each gaming experience is unique, and the worlds range from floating islands in the sky to the underworld. It's not all about building for creativity's sake, however, as the structures you make serve a purpose, allowing you to unlock additional non-player characters.

BEST FOR: SANDBOX LOVERS



EYES ATTACK

FOR: IOS
PRICE: FREE



5 A simple but highly enjoyable arcade game where you play as a feisty blue ball of fluff called Hunter and protect the world from adversaries known as the Eyes from outer space. Hunter's weapon of choice is a rock, which you can throw by tapping on the screen. The main element of difficulty comes in trying to aim, as you must tilt your device in order to toss the rock in the right direction, otherwise you will run into the enemy.

BEST FOR: ARCADE ADDICTS



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Your community for
reading and celebrating
fantastic fiction



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This Issue We Read: The Walking Dead

Turn to page 92 to see why, and let
us know what you think



Next We'll Be Reading: Elric by Michael Moorcock



1 Pick up *Elric Of Melniboné* by Michael Moorcock, the sword and sorcery tale that spawned a sprawling epic and redefined the antihero.

2 Follow SciFiNow on Twitter. Read and share your thoughts with the hashtag #BookClub; they might make it into the magazine!

3 You can contribute to the Book Club discussions as much or as little as you like; the most important thing is that you have fun.

4 Pick up issue 88 of SciFiNow to check out what we thought and learn about the history of the book and its author with our Essential Read.

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How Robert Kirkman proved there was more to comics than superheroes

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Roald Dahl
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THIS IS YOUR BOOK CLUB

Your Opinions

Tell us what you've been reading on Facebook or Twitter, and we'll print it

Your Decision

Let us know what you want to see. This is your section, so tell us what you think

Your Reviews

Write a review of the last book you read, and it could appear on scifinow.co.uk. Submit your review as a 300-word text file to scifinow@imagine-publishing.co.uk

WORDS
MATTHEW
HANDRAHAN

ESSENTIAL READ: THE WALKING DEAD

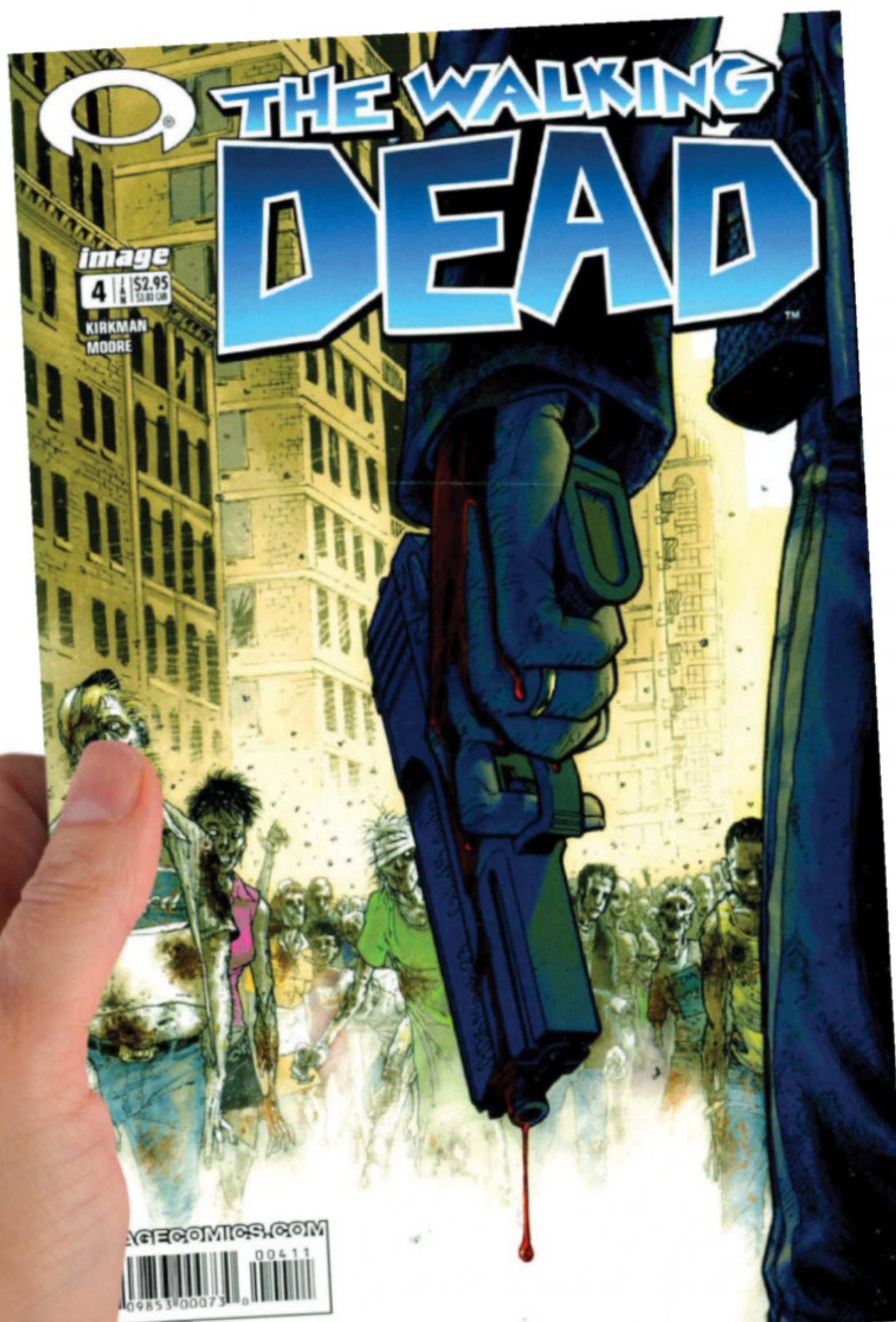
ROBERT KIRKMAN AND
CHARLIE ADLARD'S ZOMBIES
HAVE CONQUERED COMICS, TV
AND VIDEOGAMES. MARVEL,
DC, YOUR TIME MAY BE UP...

© Gage Skidmore

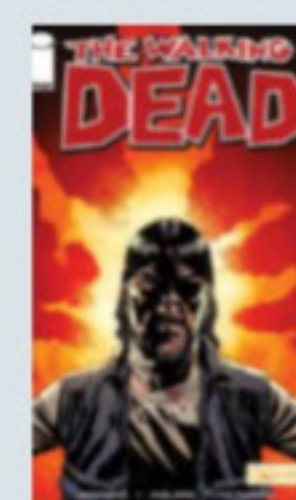


For more than half a century, comics have been suffering from Stockholm Syndrome. In the mid-Fifties, the tireless meddling of the American psychiatrist Fredric Wertham led to widespread moral panic in the United States, the crucible of the burgeoning global market for comic-books. Like rock 'n' roll, jazz, cinema, novels and a good many other nascent forms of culture, comics stood accused of corrupting the innocent. A set of rules was created to shield the young from depictions of gratuitous sex and wanton violence; the Comics Code Authority was born, and a little of the diversity in the form started to die.

The ripples caused by the implementation of the code are difficult to comprehend, but equally hard to overstate. Vital elements of entire genres were effectively guaranteed censorship: the kidnappings, gang violence and anti-heroes of crime comics; the werewolves, vampires and ghosts so essential to horror, and even the word 'horror' itself; the bad guys were never allowed to win, crime had to meet a suitable punishment, and figures of authority were to be respected and obeyed at all times. Not every publisher adhered to the Code, and a few flaunted its rules, but if you couldn't display its seal on your cover then you could kiss your advertising revenue goodbye. The Comics Code would bring long-standing businesses



SYNOPSIS



Deputy Rick Grimes is in hospital, rendered comatose by a bullet from an armed criminal's gun. After weeks of fighting for survival, Rick wakes up, only to find a very different world

to the one he left. The hospital has been torn apart in a vicious battle and, outside, decaying corpses shamble around the streets, feasting on human flesh. Worse still, Rick's wife and son are missing so, acting on a rumour, he embarks on a perilous journey to the city of Atlanta.

Bad move. Only when he arrives does Rick come face-to-face with the scale of the 'walker' infestation, escaping only with the help of a group of survivors. The good news is that they're the same group with which Rick's wife, son and former partner Shane have taken refuge; the bad news is that Shane isn't best pleased about his friend's abrupt return. Rick has far more to worry about than the walking dead...

to their knees, and profoundly affect the development of the form for decades. Only in 2010 did the last publisher abandon the Code's oft-revised rules and diktats.

More than anything, though, the Code ensured that comics became a medium defined by superheroes. Not every costumed crusader was a paragon of moral virtue, but the vast majority were, and those that flirted with ambiguity at least did so in the name of justice and the eradication of crime. Companies like Marvel and DC soared to new heights of mainstream recognition virtually unopposed, even by genres that dominated in other media like cinema and television. The combination of panels, images and words has near limitless potential for telling stories, and yet the majority of mainstream publications were concerned primarily with men – and the occasional woman – in capes and tights. Granted, influential figures like Stan Lee, Steve Ditko, Frank Miller and Alan Moore managed to locate depth and nuance in these fanciful characters, but only now is the true breadth of the form being explored.

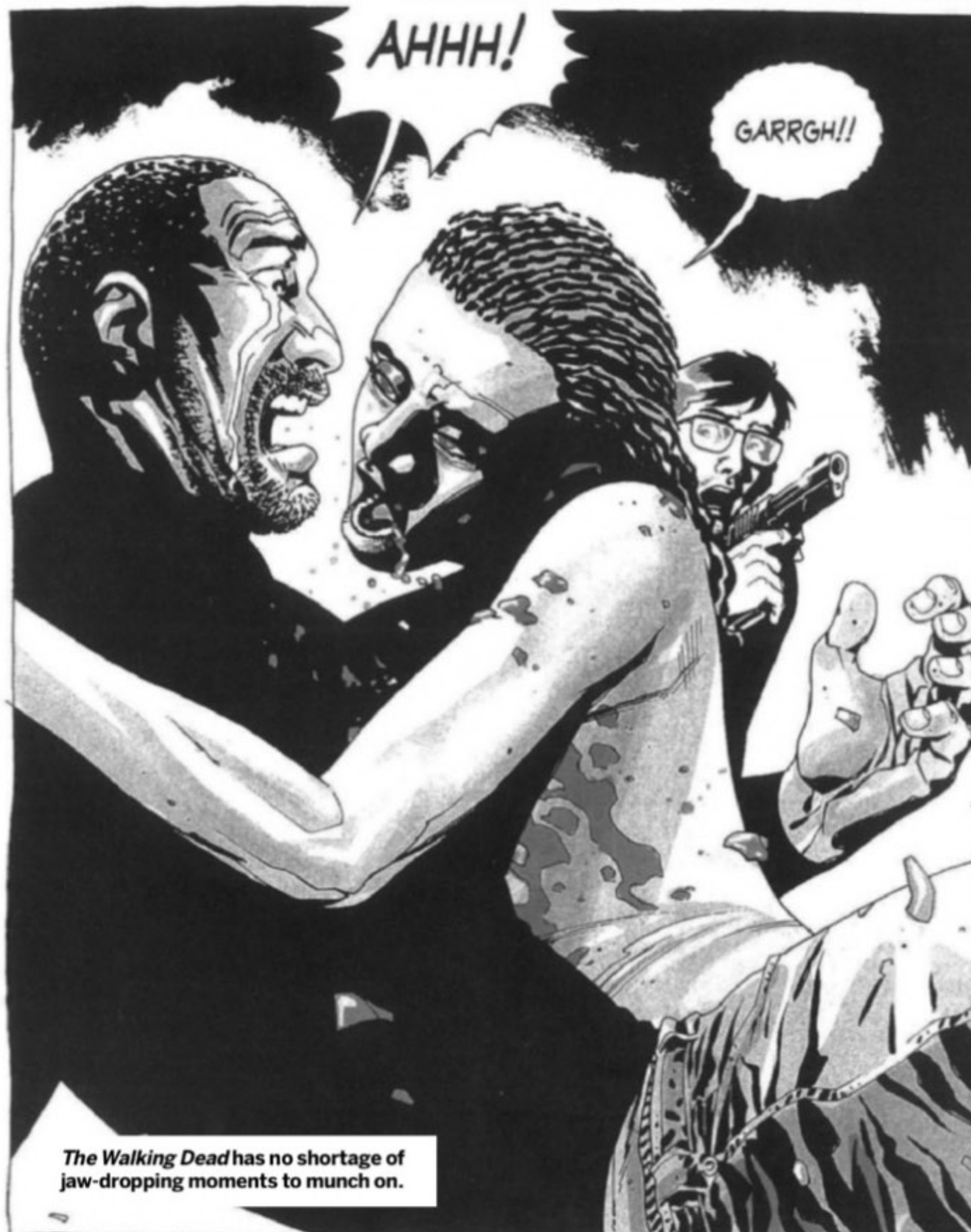
For Robert Kirkman, however, it would be unwise to hand out too many pats on the back just yet. The dominance of superheroes has also led to the rise of a small number of publishers who specialise in a narrow range of subject matter. With all the safe money tied up in work-for-hire contracts on superhero books, the industry's brightest talents are almost constantly engaged in scraping the last vestiges of inspiration from the same dwindling supply. Kirkman feared that this would lead to the stagnation of the market, and released a video manifesto in 2008 imploring creators to abandon the major publishers and follow their muse.



"There is no gold watch, there is no retirement package, and there is no dinner where they usher you off in the golden age of your life," he told *NYC Graphic Novelists* this year. "They go, 'Well, you're not selling comics anymore for us buddy. Goodbye, now go away.'"

"While I do think that it's great to work for them, and they were pretty good to me, it's just recognising the nature of your business. They're not your friends and it's not something that's going to sustain you for the rest of your life. The goal with any career should be to figure out what will get you to your later years and doing that. Marvel and DC are definitely not that."

"WHILE HARDLY A CRITICAL DARLING, IN COMMERCIAL TERMS THE WALKING DEAD IS A SUCCESS STORY WITHOUT PEER"



The Walking Dead has no shortage of jaw-dropping moments to munch on.

As a partner at booming independent publisher Image Comics, Kirkman is one of the few people with the influence to throw down the gauntlet in this way, and it's all because of *The Walking Dead*. While hardly a critical darling on a par with *Watchmen* or *Sandman*, in commercial terms *The Walking Dead* is a success story without peer. First published in 2003 with art from Tony Moore (replaced after issue six by Charlie Adlard, while Moore continued to supply covers until issue 24), whose tight lines and iconic character design defined the look and claustrophobic tone of the world, it has ascended to the pinnacle of popular

5 Reasons to read...

The Walking Dead

1 The comic will keep you reading for a long time yet. The series is already substantial – Issue 115 and counting – and its popularity ensures that it will continue for a long time to come.

2 If it ever ends at all. *The Walking Dead's* constantly evolving storyline is core to what Kirkman sought to achieve, and he has been candid about stating that he has no clear idea of how it will end, and therefore no intention to do so.

3 Kirkman will be the first to tell you that the TV series goes to darker places than the comics, but he may be flattering to deceive. On paper, *The Walking Dead* ventures into territory that its screen counterpart would never dare.

4 There is a universe outside of the comic that rewards exploration. The TV series has its weaknesses, but also a great many strengths, while Telltale's episodic game is a standalone adaptation that stands shoulder-to-shoulder with anything by Kirkman.

5 Kirkman has framed *The Walking Dead* as the opening salvo in an ongoing battle to make comics a less hostile medium for creatives. He isn't alone in this pursuit, of course, but the series' success has made him one of the most influential people in the industry.



Over 100 issues on, and there's still no end in sight for *The Walking Dead*.

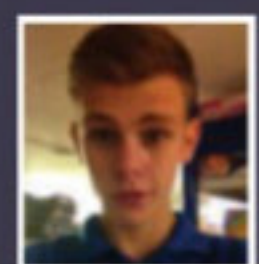
**Your Take On
The Classic**

WHAT YOU
THOUGHT
@SCIFINOW



#BookClub @kevinscully

"I'm glad the series is taking different turns than the comic, keeps me on my toes!"



"The books are MILES better than the show. #BookClub" @MrBradPreston



@Swill_i_ams

"Been reading it from the very beginning. Great to see a 'realistic' take on the end of the world. #BookClub"



@autokratik

"Loved it until Issue 100, then I had that moment of realisation that I wasn't enjoying it. Too traumatic. Still read it though. #BookClub"



#BookClub @TrudieBroo

"At times it was hideous, but I just couldn't stop reading. That more than anything makes me question my humanity and morality."



@sidekickcast

"Definitely read #TheWalkingDead, it dips at times, but it's still one of the most consistently good comics out there."



@robbrichardson

"I think its strength is that it's a book about humanity that features zombies. It's NOT a zombie title as such."



@Chanzo82

"It's very good, but I wish it was in colour! #BookClub"

What do you think? Let us know on Twitter or Facebook



**Issue 88's
Essential Read:
Elric by Michael
Moorcock**

Join in and share your thoughts on
Twitter or Facebook



➤ culture in less than a decade. It has, at certain points, monopolised the *New York Times* bestseller lists, been turned into an all-conquering TV-ratings giant, spawned one of the most celebrated videogames of recent years and propelled its creator onto the board of Image with his own publishing imprint, Skybound. *The Walking Dead* is a phenomenon, and compelling proof of Kirkman's hypothesis that the prosperity of the industry – both creatively and commercially – is in the hands of the independent comic publishers.

"There's one thing I've always hated about zombie movies, and that is the end," Kirkman told *Inside New York*. "Zombie movies end one of two ways: either all the characters die, or most of the characters die and the few that live ride off into the sunset. What occurred to me is that the most interesting stuff is what happens after people ride off into the sunset. I always wondered where those people went, how they continued to survive, find food, get water, protect each other, and be able to deal with the zombie threat long term for years and years."

High-concept, reliant on visual drama and with no obvious end-point, the comic format perfectly complemented Kirkman and Moore (and later Adlard)'s vision of the zombie apocalypse. But as exhaustively as the subject matter had been explored in other media, it was still new territory for comics. Horror had never quite rediscovered the popularity it enjoyed before the Code neutered the genre in the Fifties, and vampires, werewolves and other supernatural creatures had proved more popular among creators since then. There was an opportunity, Kirkman reasoned, to use the unique aspects of the comic medium to make an original addition to the zombie canon.

"WHAT OCCURRED TO ME IS THAT THE MOST INTERESTING STUFF IS WHAT HAPPENS AFTER PEOPLE RIDE OFF INTO THE SUNSET" ROBERT KIRKMAN

One aspect of this is *The Walking Dead's* tight embrace of the single-issue format. As the medium has grasped for mainstream acceptance, the most ambitious creators have gravitated towards the graphic novel – generally six or more issues bundled together, which encouraged creators to tell bigger and more complicated stories. However, Kirkman believes that single issues – and the regimented drip-feed of story they offer – are central to what made comics so popular in the first place. As such, each edition of *The Walking Dead* climaxes with a 'cliffhanger' scene that leads directly into the opening moment or image of the next issue. There are plotlines playing out over longer periods, but Kirkman always gives his readers a compelling reason to come back for more.

"To me, that's just how comics are done," he said in an interview with *Comic Gate*. "I don't like it when an entire story is self-contained in six issues, followed by another completely self-contained arc. I want things to build in my stories... and build up to payoff, so that people feel rewarded by reading long runs of the books. That's what I liked as a fan... and that's what I like in the books I write. It keeps me interested."

This sense of momentum is lent an anarchic, occasionally nihilistic edge by a trait Kirkman shares with *A Song Of Ice And Fire* author George RR Martin: the willingness to go to places other authors would never dare, to kill and maim his

darlings with reckless abandon. If you have ever been a regular reader of *The Walking Dead*, you will likely have encountered an issue where some brutal plot-twist or sickening act felt like a personal challenge, and Kirkman has indeed been accused of going too far on more than one occasion – if you stuck around for Issue 100 then you'll know exactly what we mean.

But rather than baiting the reader, the subject of Kirkman's torment is his own creative impulses. Writers in all media are often tempted to take an easier path to avoid future complications for their characters, but *The Walking Dead* thrives on unknowable consequences. Kirkman has openly lamented some of these decisions – the removal of an important character's hand being a prime example – but only for the tight spots they have placed him in as a writer. For the reader, these abrupt turns are exactly why *The Walking Dead* has remained so vital.

"I'm always running through this stuff in my head, when I shower, when I drive, when I'm eating, when I'm supposed to be having a conversation with someone... it's taken over my life," Kirkman said. "I'm not bound to [any] plot outline, I veer from it quite a bit – I've even completely changed the last half of a couple issues at the last minute because I've changed my mind. I'll decide to kill off a character or I'll decide not to kill off a character... it's all up in the air until it's typed up."



Right now, it could be argued that *The Walking Dead*'s popularity is not entirely down to Kirkman's commercial nous. Despite its enormous viewing figures, the TV series has been uneven and at times shallow, while Telltale's excellent videogame is altogether less bloody and histrionic. Collectively, they make *The Walking Dead* one of the most formidable brands in popular culture, but it's possible to love one manifestation and loathe the other. There is clearly an appetite for zombie lore that *The Walking Dead* has been well placed to satiate – just as *Twilight* did for vampires – but it's worth asking if we'll be discussing Kirkman's work alongside Miller and Moore in 20 years.

Frankly, it's doubtful that even Kirkman regards *The Walking Dead* as a worthy counterpart to titans like *Watchmen* and *The Dark Knight Returns*. When he takes to the podium to make proclamations about the future of comics, he is addressing the underlying structure more than the artistry. *The Walking Dead* is not necessarily an example of the best that the medium can offer, but what a few passionate people can achieve with the right idea and the will to cut against the grain. That shuffling pack of walkers may not seem like much of a threat, but take your eye off them for long enough and even superheroes can be overwhelmed.

"Relying on Marvel and DC is no longer becoming a viable option, because the contracts aren't viable and the rates aren't set. They make the rules," Kirkman said in an interview with *NYC Graphic Novelists*. "A lot of people have fooled themselves into thinking that's stability, but are now realising that it's the exact opposite."

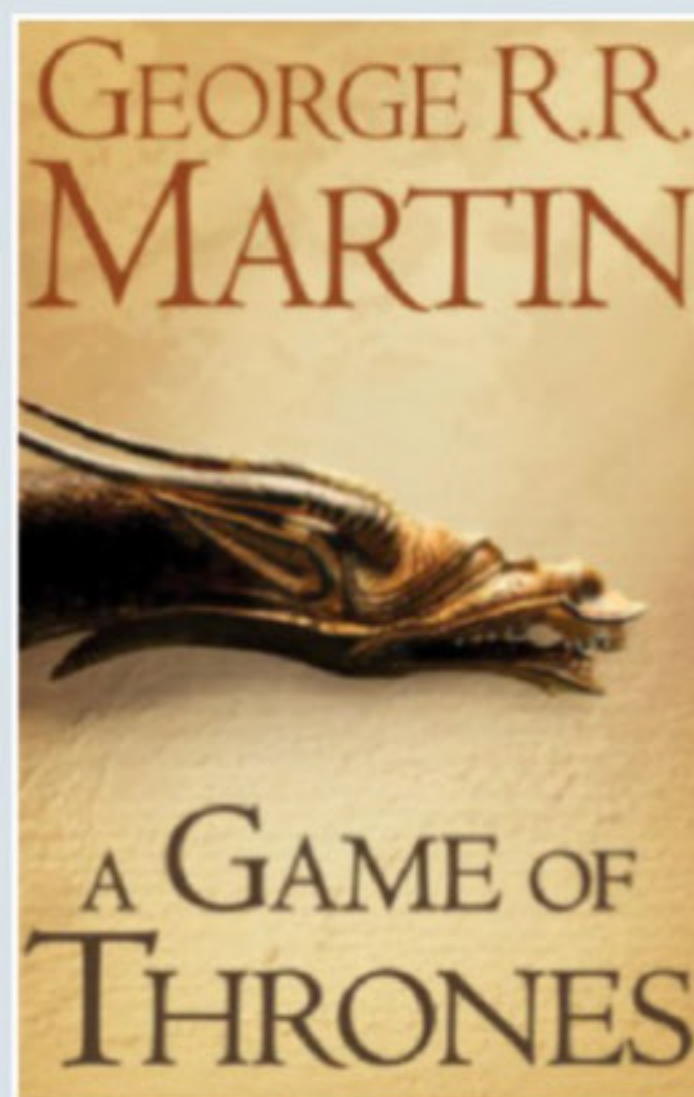
"What's most important to this industry is having new ideas and having them be successful and get embraced by the audience, then having that lead to more new ideas. I think that's going to lead to an industry that is radically different, more exciting and fresher over the next few years. It's what we need to do to survive. I think we're working towards that goal, and I would never claim responsibility for that myself, but I like to do my part." ☺

Where Have I Seen This Before?

UNDEAD RECKONING

DAY OF THE DEAD ▶

You can't work with zombie fiction and be ignorant of George Romero's seminal films, and it's *Day Of The Dead* that best complements Robert Kirkman's vision for *The Walking Dead*. *Night Of The Living Dead* and *Day Of The Dead* are mainly about the outbreak, but *Day* is concerned with the aftermath – the last-ditch attempt to find a new way to live in a world that has gone to hell.



◀ A SONG OF ICE AND FIRE

George RR Martin may have furnished his peerless fantasy series with his own take on zombies, but it's in his willingness to kill characters – often in the most unpleasant of ways – that offers a clear parallel with *The Walking Dead*. Kirkman has penned his fair share of 'Red Wedding' moments, the most recent of which was a divisive death in Issue 100.

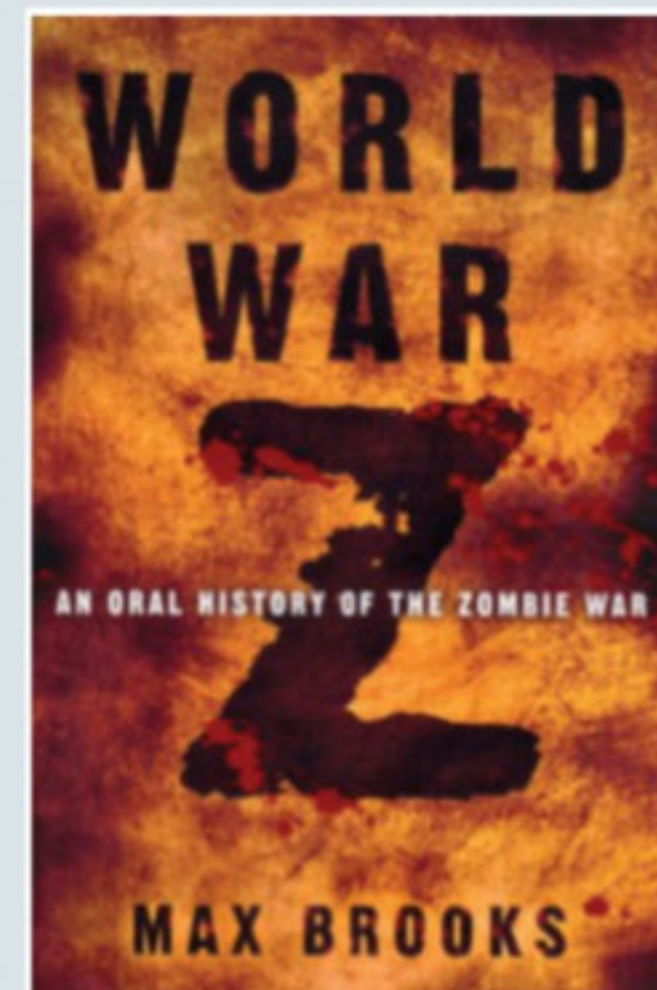
28 DAYS LATER ▶

Kirkman decided against using Danny Boyle and Alex Garland's fast 'infected', but there's a certain intensity and realist edge to *28 Days Later* that resonates in *The Walking Dead*. Oh, and there's the small matter of the outbreak occurring while the protagonist of both stories lies comatose in a hospital. Frankly, that's unlikely to be a coincidence.



THE WALKING DEAD ▲

There are now several games based on *The Walking Dead* – including Terminal Reality's execrable *Survival Instinct* – but the best by a mile is Telltale Games' episodic series. The winner of several Game of the Year awards, this is arguably the most emotionally resonant version of *The Walking Dead*, even if its gameplay leaves a little to be desired.



◀ WORLD WAR Z

Despite the abundance of zombies in popular culture, very few have attempted to explore the idea in media with no pictures. Certainly, there is something uniquely visual about the horde's creeping threat, but Max Brooks artfully sidesteps this with a structure that breaks down the zombie apocalypse into a series of reports from around the world.

Y: THE LAST MAN ▶

Brian K Vaughan and Pia Guerra's long-running series is another darling of post-apocalyptic comic fiction. However, *Y: The Last Man*'s premise – one man survives the extinction of every male mammal on the planet, and is left in a world entirely populated by women – allows for a more playful tone. At the very least, the pregnancies go a lot more smoothly.

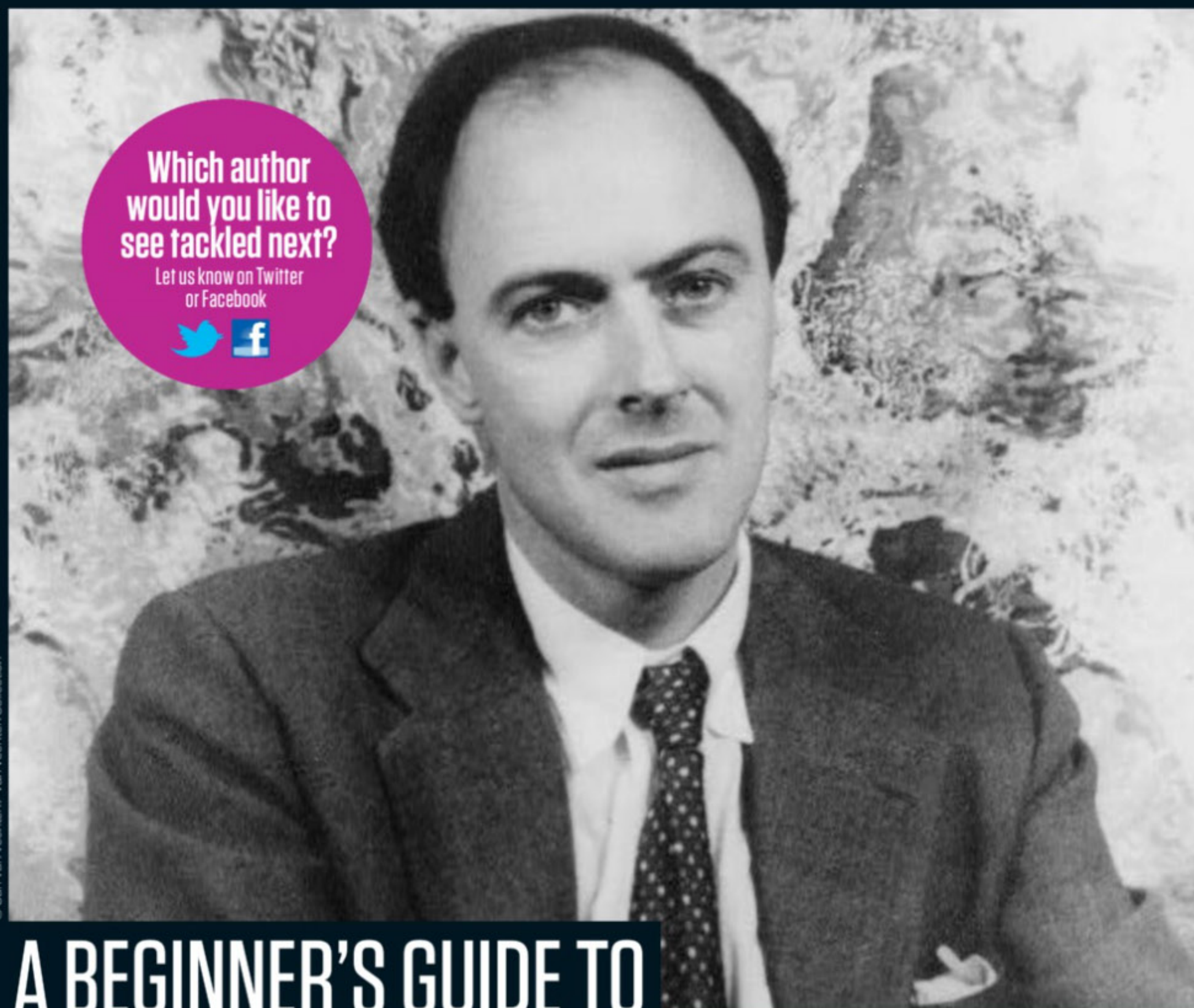


Which author
would you like to
see tackled next?

Let us know on Twitter
or Facebook



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A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ROALD DAHL

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Where to begin with mysterious manager of the dream factory

Few authors have had the same impact on children's literature as Roald Dahl. The writer of *Charlie And The Chocolate Factory* and *The Witches* created weird and wonderful worlds that combined fantastical settings with a dark wit and a very real sense of danger. Dahl understood the essential truth that children should not be talked down to.

Dahl left school with the intention of travelling the world. His exploits led to him joining the Air Force in 1939 before he was shot down in the Mediterranean. Having recovered from his injuries, he gave writing a go after being encouraged by *Hornblower* author CS Forester. He found success with *The Gremlins*, his first book for children, but Dahl was determined

to pursue adult fiction. His first novel, *Sometime Never: A Fable For Supermen*, was a critical and commercial failure, although his short story collections proved to be much more popular. It wouldn't be

**"EVEN THE STORIES
WITH BLEAK
ENDINGS CAME WITH
A SILVER LINING"**

until 1961 that he returned to books for children with *James And The Giant Peach*. The novel's success prompted a run of marvellous stories, including *Fantastic Mr Fox*, *Matilda* and *The Twits*.

His novels for children were often controversial due to their dark

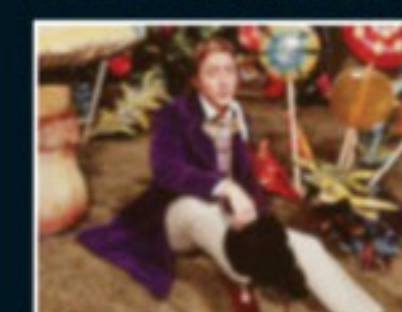
subject matter. Dahl understood his readership very well, and often featured scenes in which the young hero takes gruesome revenge on the horrible adults. Nowhere is this more evident than in *The Twits*, in which the hideous titular couple subject each other to increasingly grotesque pranks. However, Dahl defended himself by stating that he was writing according to the demands of his readership. Although his tales are often dark, even the stories with bleak endings come with a silver lining.

While some very good films have been directly inspired by his books, none of them have quite managed to capture that delicate balance between light and dark. The moments of sentimentality in Dahl's stories always have a tinge of the bittersweet.

DAHL-VDS

FIVE BEST ROALD
DAHL FILMS

Willy Wonka And The Chocolate Factory



While the Tim Burton update has its charms, it's not a patch on Mel Stuart's glorious and scary 1971 adaptation. Gene Wilder is perfect as the unpredictable but ultimately good-hearted eccentric, and the songs are just wonderful.

The Witches



Don't Look Now director Nicolas Roeg may have given Dahl's story a disappointingly happy ending in 1990, but it retains the marvellously creepy opening and the Woman in Black, and there's no denying just how brilliant Anjelica Huston is as the Grand High Witch.

Fantastic Mr Fox



The fox equivalent of Robin Hood was given the stop-motion treatment by arthouse darling Wes Anderson, with George Clooney, Meryl Streep and Bill Murray on voice duties. It diverges from the source, but is marvellous nevertheless.

James And The Giant Peach



The Nightmare Before Christmas director Henry Selick took on *James And The Giant Peach* in 1996 for a charming, mostly stop-motion adventure. While it's perhaps not as memorable as Selick's other features, it's a lovely film that deserves a reappraisal.

Matilda



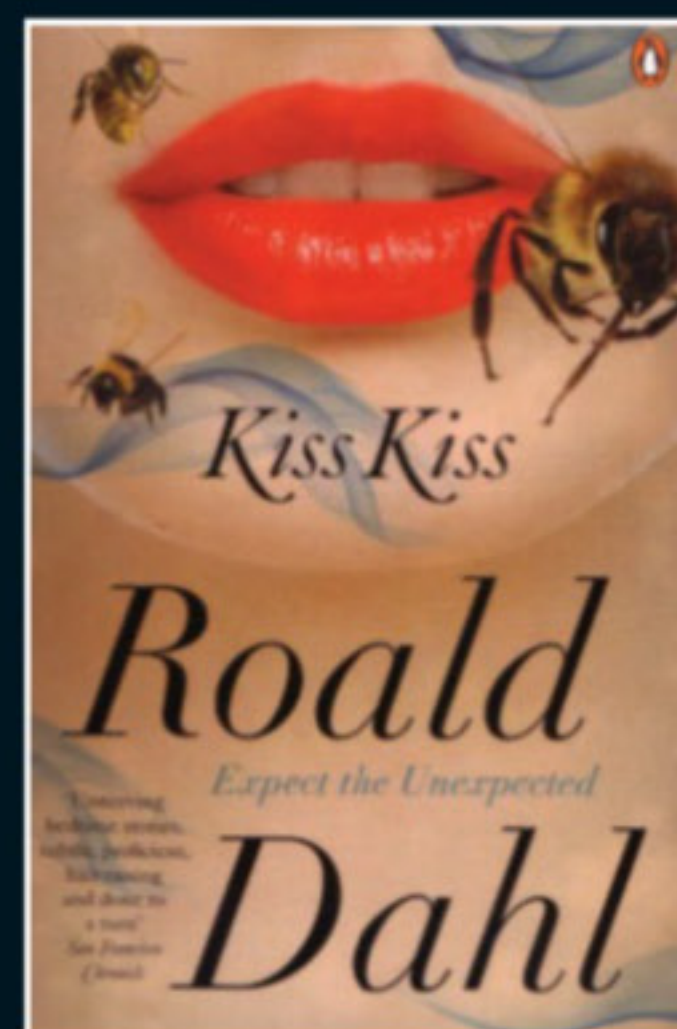
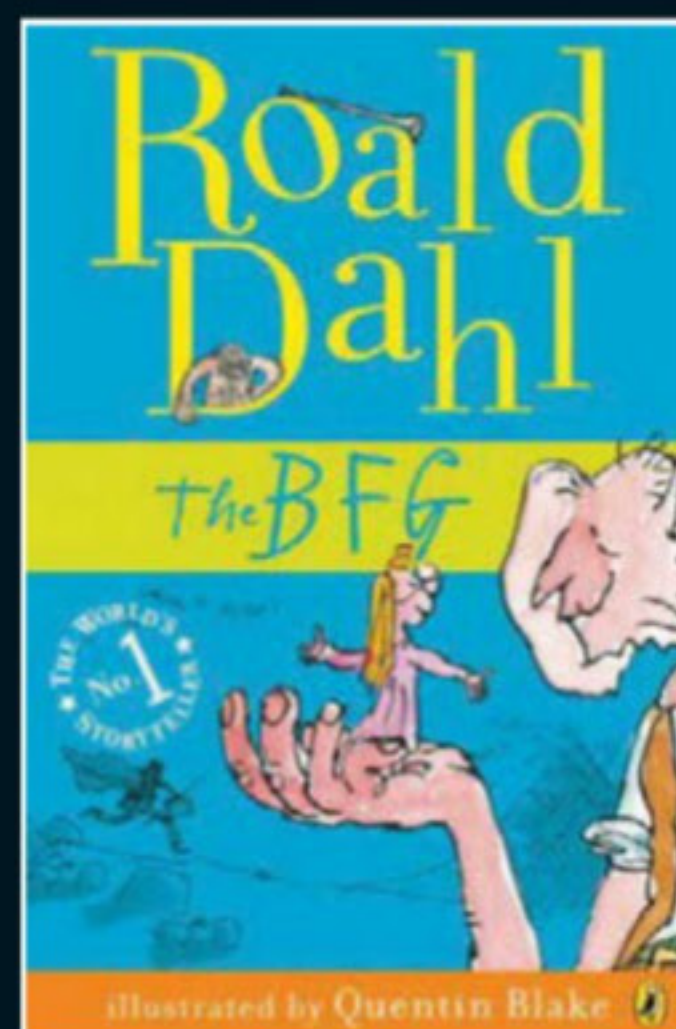
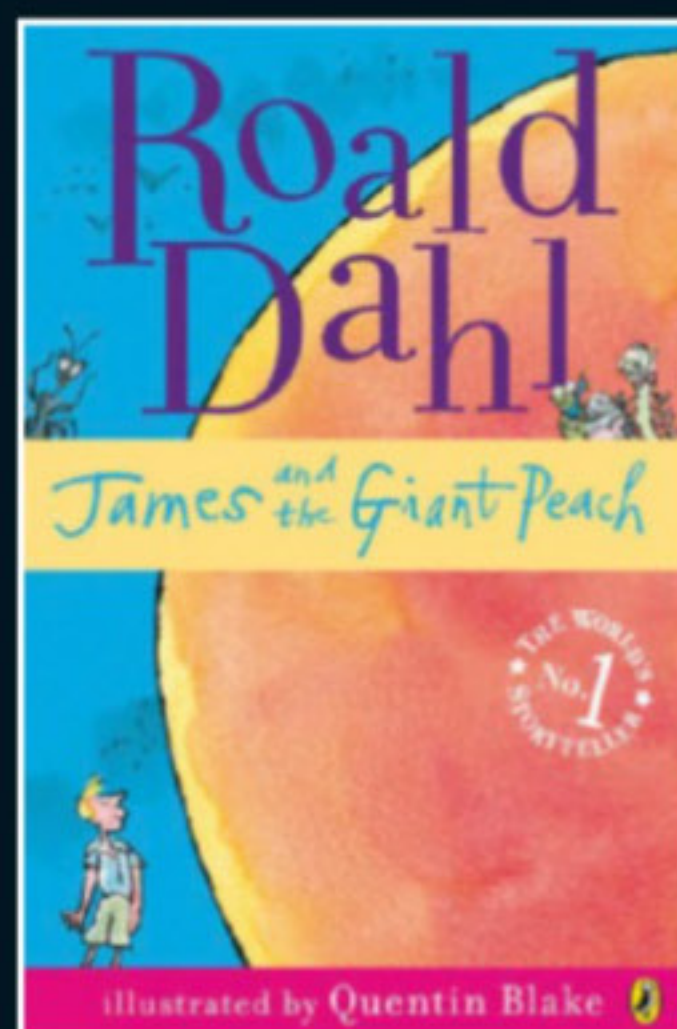
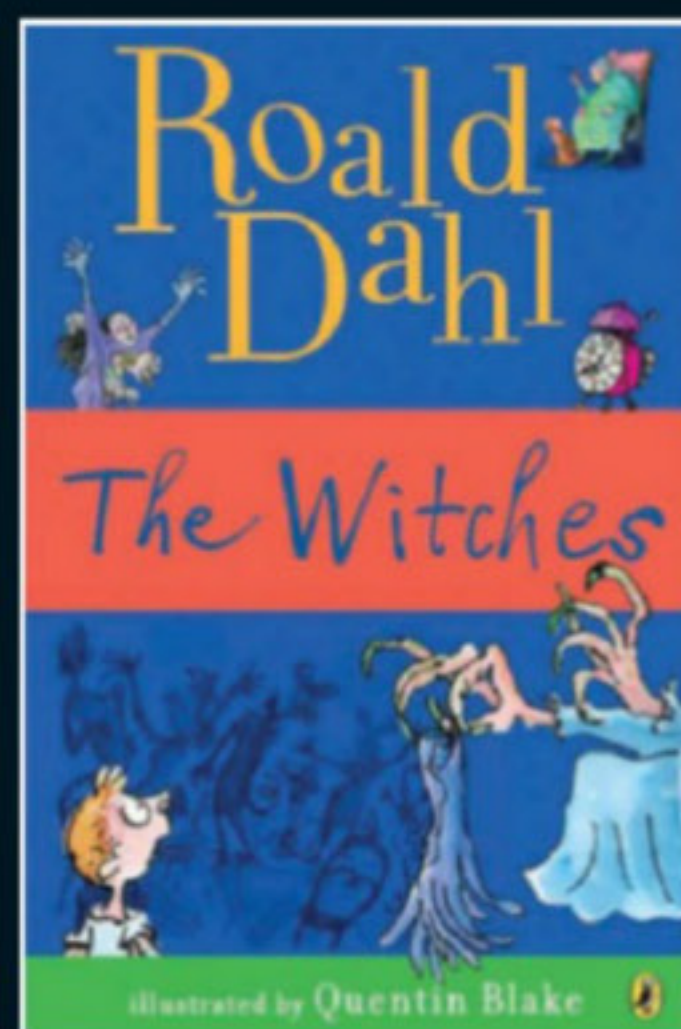
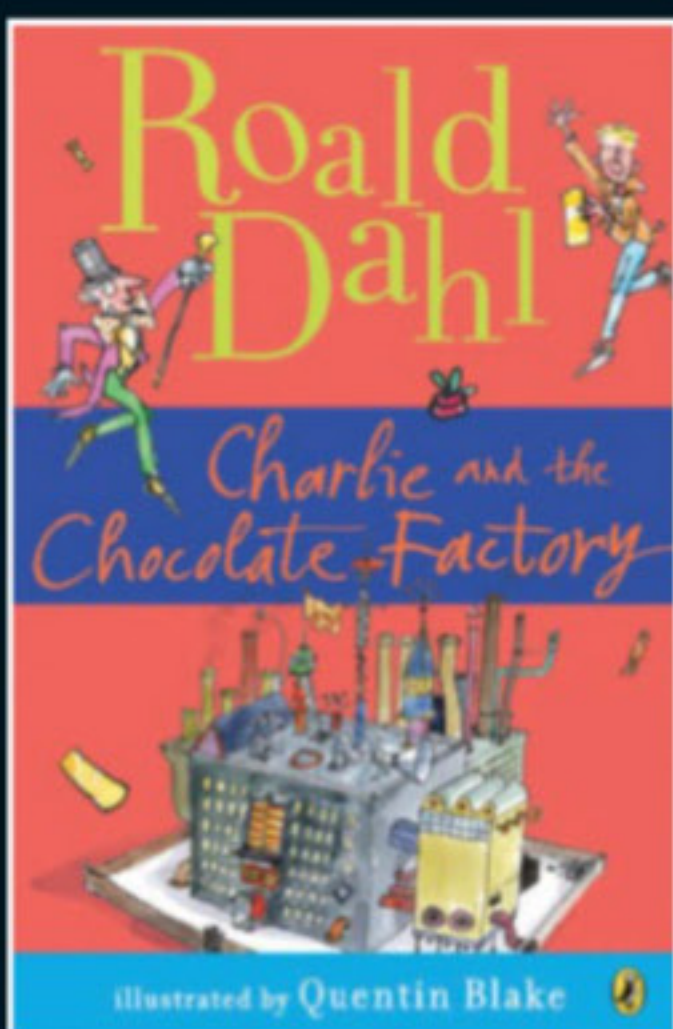
Dahl's heartwarming tale of a young telekinetic girl was relocated to New Jersey by director and star Danny DeVito, with the adorable Mara Wilson cast in the title role. It lacks some of the bite of the novel, but the performances are good and it's great fun.



Dahl never shied away from using dark subject matter in his stories.



Cinematic adaptations of his works have been a mixed bag, although *Willy Wonka And The Chocolate Factory* is beloved by many.



Pure imagination

A young boy's dreams come true

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
Publisher: Puffin
Published: 1964
Price: £6.99

The story of young Charlie Bucket, who finally gets his heart's desire when he finds a golden ticket to tour Willa Wonka's factory, is part wish fulfilment, part cautionary tale. The good-hearted Charlie easily wins our affections, along with his hard-working parents and bed-sharing grandparents, but once we enter Wonka's factory Dahl sprinkles his voyage with valuable lessons. Greed, gluttony and avarice are given no quarter, but darker moments never detract from the joy of the journey.

“One of the first books to fire up my imagination (and the first kids' book to tell me it's not all flowers and rainbows). #BookClub” @steppenfreak

Dark fairy-tail

Why you should never take sweets from strangers

THE WITCHES
Publisher: Puffin
Published: 1983
Price: £6.99

Dahl's work was sprinkled with a hint (well, sometimes a lot) of darkness, but *The Witches* remains his scariest children's book. After his parents die in a car accident, a young boy goes to live with his grandmother, who warns him of the dangers of witches. Despite some memorable sequences involving children being turned into mice, it's Grandmother's stories that stay with you. From the child trapped in a painting to the girl who was turned into a hen, the vindictiveness of these wicked women is absolutely terrifying.

“It used to make me nervous of people with pointy shoes or gloves on!” #BookClub” @willow8913

Sweet and sour

Coming of age inside a colossal piece of fruit

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH
Publisher: Puffin
Published: 1961
Price: £6.99

Dahl never taught children about the arbitrariness of death as effectively as he did with the demise of young James' parents, who are trampled by a rhino. While the hero of *The Witches* goes to live with his kindly grandma, James is sent to his cruel aunts. However, once he's inside the eponymous peach, James gets the family he's always wanted in the form of a group of giant insects (and an earthworm). It is on the American Library Association's list of 100 Most Challenged Books for its dark subject matter, clocking in at 56.

“You can't discount *The Twits* or *James And The Giant Peach*. Both feature classic Dahl evil grown-ups. #BookClub” @eddsnotdead

Larger than life

A man travels to hell to rescue his wife

THE BFG
Publisher: Puffin Press
Published: 1982
Price: £6.99

Dahl always had a gift for concocting tongue-twisting names, but rarely was this more in evidence than in *The BFG*. With evil giants such as the Bonecruncher and Childchewer, it's little surprise that the Big Friendly Giant, with his diet of snozzcumbers and frobscottle, made such an impression on young Sophie. This is lighter in tone than many of his children's books, with a delightful breakfast scene between Sophie, the BFG and the Queen, although it does still feature monsters who eat children.

“I love *More Tales Of The Unexpected*. Brilliant stuff in there, but the big kid in me has to go for *The BFG*. I like the words in it. #BookClub” @jeffbiscuits

Dark surprises

A group of decidedly grown-up stories

COLLECTED STORIES
Publisher: Penguin
Published: 1960
Price: £8.99

His children's books may have been darker than most, but anyone curious to see just how pitch black Dahl's imagination could be should seek out this collection of short stories for adults. A wicked sense of dark humour runs through this series, with poetic justice, unhappy accidents and disastrous sexual discovery. A woman kills her husband with a leg of lamb, a landlady's tea tastes of bitter almonds, and giving royal jelly to a baby produces terrifying results. A deeply unpleasant worldview, but these stories are unforgettable.

“‘William And Mary’ (short story), because I never knew my favourite childhood author could write sci-fi. #BookClub” @DanCarpenter85



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Details Author: Lavie Tidhar Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton Price: £18.99

THE VIOLENT CENTURY

Of spies and men

The political implications of superheroes existing in the real world are not exactly underexplored, and Alan Moore's *Watchmen* left the bar raised at a near impossible height. Despite the clear influence of Moore's seminal tome, Lavie Tidhar's novel *The Violent Century* finds as much inspiration in John Le Carre's grim tales of British espionage. Patriotism is a burden, conflict doesn't end with war and humanity is quietly folded away for an intangible greater good.

The central conceit is that in the early Thirties, a machine turns a select group of people all over the world into superheroes – or ubermenschen. As World War II begins, each nation uses their supermen and women differently. The Americans turn them into brash propaganda tools as much as weapons, the Germans take them to

concentration camps for further study, and the British turn theirs into spies.

The Violent Century begins in the present day, with Agent Fogg being called back in to answer for an act he committed at the close of WWII. Over

glamorous or exciting; it's a grim, cold and lonely place. The author does a lot with a relatively minimalist style, and he envelops us in Transylvanian forests with Count Dracula's transformed descendant and the frozen

"ENVISIONING LECKIE'S WORLD IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE, WHICH IS A SHAME, AS THERE'S POTENTIAL"

a series of flashbacks, we see the war through Fogg's eyes, as well as the division of Europe and brief sojourns to Vietnam and Afghanistan.

The level of detail with which Tidhar fills his novel ensures that the events he is using as his setting feel convincing. Like Le Carre's best novels, the world of espionage isn't

battleground of Minsk without ever slowing down.

One of the sacrifices that seems to have been made is that the supporting characters don't feel as fleshed out as they could have been. This works well in the case of Fogg's partner Oblivion, who remains an intriguing and distant but sympathetic figure. However, the rest of Fogg's team are painted in quick, interesting strokes, but very little more. Characters like the acerbic Spit (whose power is what it sounds like) and Mrs Tinkle (not in this case) would have benefited from more detail.

It does occasionally feel as though we're rushed too quickly through a story that covers so much territory, but on the other hand it's impressive how much ground Tidhar covers. By the time ubermenschen and Jerry Siegel are sharing the witness stand at a Sixties-set trial of a Nazi criminal, it's clear that Tidhar has successfully merged his two worlds.

At the centre of this is the question, 'What makes a hero?' The supermen of Tidhar's novel are forced to commit terrible acts in the name of the greater good, and stand by and watch as terrible acts are committed for the same reason. As well as being a wonderfully drawn and detailed historical espionage tale, *The Violent Century* is ultimately a very human story. It's gripping, imaginative and, finally, moving.

Jonathan Hatfull

VERDICT ★★★★★



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

Watchmen
Alan Moore/Dave Gibbons
An obvious inspiration for *The Violent Century*, and it's consistently re-readable.



Your Five Alternate History

CHOOSE YOUR TOP FIVE @SCIFINOW ON TWITTER



1. The Man In The High Castle

Philip K Dick
"It makes me thank God even more than usual that Hitler didn't win the war."
#BookClub"
@the_storyboard_



2. Fatherland

Robert Harris
"Fatherland is my favourite. Just the bleakness when you know what really happened."
#BookClub"
@zanesmith 2000



3. An Oblique Approach

David Drake/
Eric Flint
"I really enjoyed David Drake's *Belisarius* saga – great battle scenes and a real feel for Roman history but still very SF."

#BookClub" @robhobart



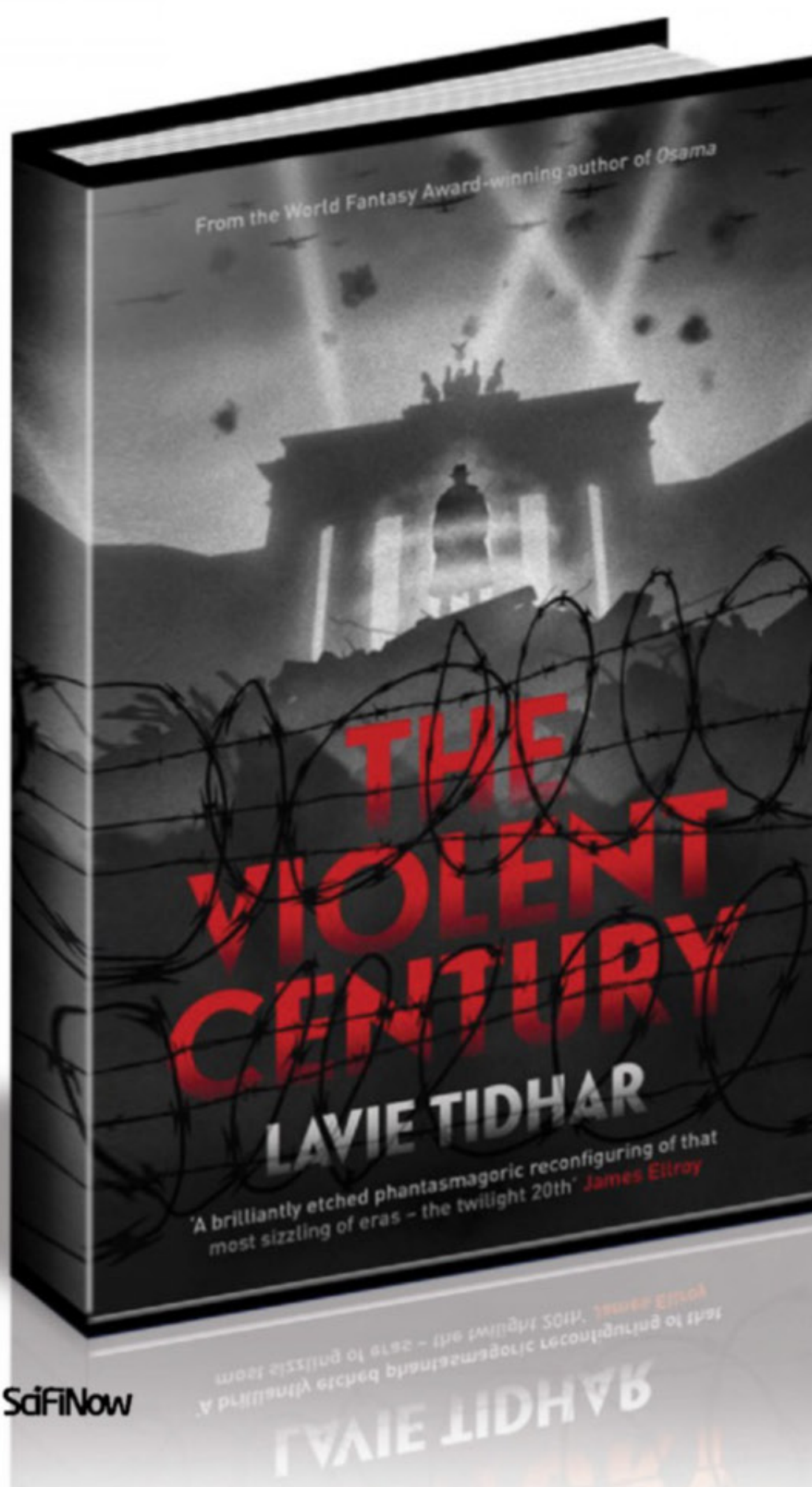
4. The Hammer And The Cross

Harry Harrison
"Feels authentic even after events depart from life."
#BookClub"
@Tim_McNulty



5. In The Balance

Harry Turtledove
"Turtledove's series with alien lizards invading Earth during WWII. Great characters from all over the world."
#BookClub"
@Betamax857



Details Author: SL Grey Publisher: Corvus Price: £7.99

THE NEW GIRL

School's out forever

Being new isn't easy, but when mysterious Jane joins Crossley College, you can't blame the other kids for avoiding her. Dual authors SL Grey (Sarah Lotz and Louis Greenberg) have painted a particularly creepy picture of the school's new addition, and you can't help but want to know what her deal is.



Teacher Tara and handyman Ryan are also intrigued. The multi-perspective narrative is written from their points of view, as well as that of Jane's 'mother', Penter. This certainly ups the intrigue when just as one character's plot

dedicated more time to conceiving creepy characters than the plot.

The overall feel is disturbing – in that good, horror-read sort of way. Even minor details, like the school that bans *Harry Potter* books, bring on a fresh set of goosebumps.

"DISTURBING IN THAT GOOD, HORROR-READ SORT OF WAY"

peaks, the POV switches. The problem, however, is that the leads aren't hugely likeable. As you find yourself siding with one, a rather large flaw – particularly in the case of Ryan – is revealed that stops your sympathy dead.

Penter is another story, and one that's never fully revealed. Initially, her chapters are ambiguous enough that you can't wait to read on, but ambiguity becomes confusion, as we've no idea who/what she is or her connection to the others. The link is revealed in time, but it seems the authors have

Jane's use of Americanisms, expletives and gangster slang can be comically sinister too, and the generally chilled and robotic personality of this 'family' makes them all the more eerie. Top marks for originality; it's just a shame the story isn't smoother.

Rowena Heal

VERDICT ★★☆☆☆



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

Little Star

John Ajvide Lindqvist

If one creepy child wasn't enough, Lindqvist's cult of killing kids is sure to keep you up at night.

Writer: Dan Simmons Publisher: Sphere Price: £18.99

THE ABOMINABLE

Not so much snowman as slow, man

You never know what you're going to get with Dan Simmons. Across his career he's been endorsed by Stephen King, created vast sci-fi epics and won dozens of awards. He's earned the right to explore something more esoteric, and *The Abominable* bears all the hallmarks of a pet project.

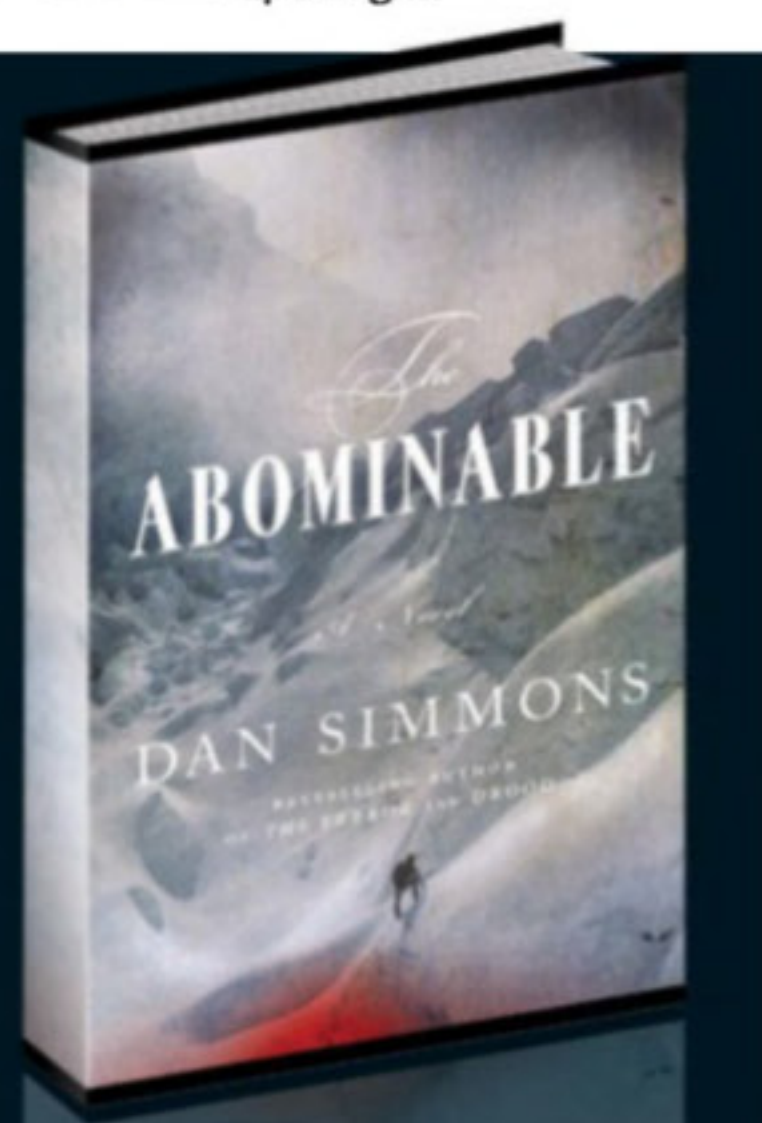
The book's narrator is Jacob Perry, who as the story kicks off in the mid-Twenties is halfway up the Matterhorn with Richard Deacon, a successful mountaineer. It is here that their party catches wind of the disappearances of Irvine and Mallory, two of Deacon's former friends and now great rivals, on Mount Everest.

Deacon decides to scale the peak himself with Perry and

their associate Jean-Claude. As they prepare, conversation turns to rumours that some sort of monster is responsible for the disappearances (the clue's in the title).

Simmons clearly invested a great deal of time researching this novel, and no one can blame him for wanting to make use of it. Unfortunately, this bogs down the 650-plus pages with background colour that only adds more shades of grey.

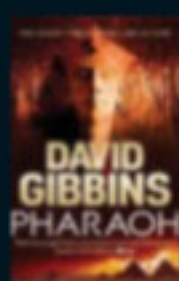
Hundreds of pages trickle by before the party even begins the Everest expedition, with all the characters exchanging expository speeches about their pasts. Perry is the worst of all, a dreary, perennial bystander in his own story. With 300 or so pages slashed out, there is



enough here to make for an invigorating blend of history and horror. Instead, Simmons has simply taken the indulgence of his muse a few steps too far.

Gareth Hughes

VERDICT ★★☆☆☆



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

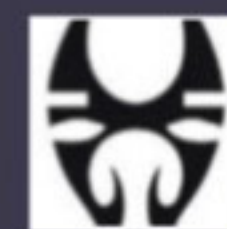
Pharaoh

David Gibbins

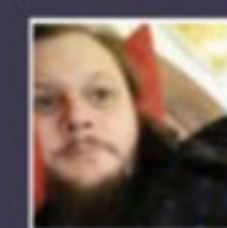
If you're into period detail, you can't go wrong with Gibbins' epoch-spanning mystery.

YOUR READS

What you lot have been reading this month



"Just picked up Jack Campbell's *Dreadnaught*. Part of the *Lost Fleet* series. If it's anything like the first six books I'll be happy. #BookClub" @Redjackal69



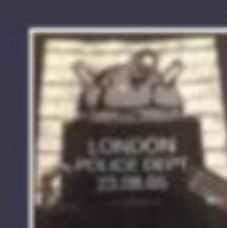
"*Bounty Hunter* by @SJHollis_ – it is good, exciting and funny. #BookClub" @quidditysea



"*Red Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson – really liking it as I like my sci-fi dense, realistic and full of science. #BookClub" @DrunkGraveyard



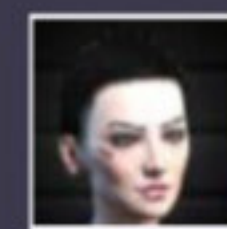
"*Doctor Sleep*. Engrossing from the first word. #BookClub" @Rozza1210



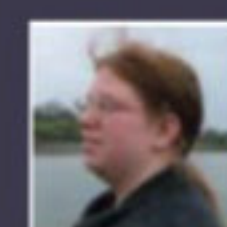
"*American Gods*, and I'm completely obsessed with finishing it, which spells bad things for my family @neilhimsself. #BookClub" @MariaLopezDavis



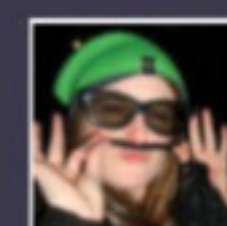
"*Downward To The Earth*, pretty good so far. Feelgood book of the year. #BookClub" @aleixdorca



"Yesterday I read @naominovik's new book. It's good. #BookClub" @jaggedrain



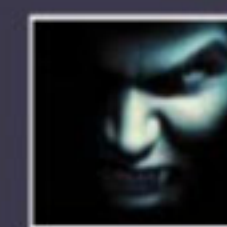
"*Chimes At Midnight* by @seananmcguire. Absolutely wonderful, as are all her books. #BookClub" @yoritomo_reiko



"*Good Omens*, it's been recommended to me lots of times and I decided to cover it in my next podcast :) #BookClub" @Emzorzin3D



"I've just started *Doctor Sleep* by Stephen King that came out today! Very excited to see what it's like. #BookClub" @saltgunner



"#BookClub *World War Z*. Brilliant. For some reason keep looking at workplace/house deciding if it's zombie proof!" @safcinexile

Tell us what you're reading on Twitter or Facebook



60 SECONDS WITH

Mira Grant



What spawned the idea for *Parasite*?

I read this brilliant non-fiction book, *Parasite Rex*, about all the lovely things that want to live inside you. Then I sort of went on a parasite binge

and started reading everything I could get my hands on, and parasites are just amazing, you know? They're why we have gender, they've driven evolution. In the course of my read-a-palooza, I learned about the Hygiene Hypothesis, and I was hooked. All of *Parasite* spiralled out of a desire to keep researching.

What are the benefits of having a SymboGen tapeworm living inside you, according to the book?

The SymboGen Intestinal Bodyguard™ is available in both generic and tailored forms. All Intestinal Bodyguards™ will provide resistance to allergic reactions, minor infections and auto-immune disorders, as well as leading to some weight loss in 80 per cent of users. Tailored Intestinal Bodyguards™ can also be used to supply daily doses of medications such as insulin, anti-depressants and birth control. Live better. Live with SymboGen.

"I AM FASCINATED BY THE WAYS THE HUMAN BODY CAN FALL APART"

Your hugely successful *Newsflesh* series also imagines a world where medicine goes really, really wrong. What is it about disease that has you hooked?

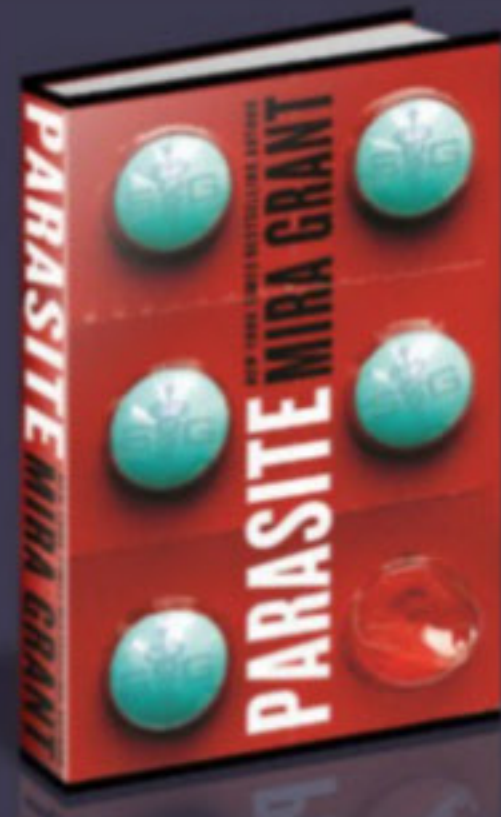
I am endlessly fascinated by both the human body and the ways that it can fall apart. I was sick a lot as a child, and at some point I had the choice to either become terrified of germs or fall in love with them. I went with the second option, and now I get to happily talk about diseases and parasites with the whole world. It's just wonderful.

Did you do anything in particular to get into the right frame of mind for writing this novel?

A lot of research, some hands-on work, and a great deal of talking to people. Talking to people is really what excites me about

anything. If I can get you enthused about a thing I'm already enthused about, we can have the most amazing time! I'm like the kiddy show host from Hell.

Parasite by Mira Grant is released 29 October, published by Orbit.



Details Author: Tony Ballantyne Publisher: Solaris Price: £7.99

DREAM LONDON

It's London Jim, but not as we know it!

Turning the pages of a book and being greeted by the opening lines "CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH. Mmmmm, mmmm. Crunch crunch crunch" is probably an indication that this isn't in the ballpark of Austen or Brontë. But by the end of



the page, it is clear that this book is in a world of its own, quite literally.

When you are as handsome as Captain Jim Wedderburn, everything else seems irrelevant: friends, money, health; all are insignificant when you can get by on looks alone. It's not until rival gangs begin to target Jim as an unlikely hero that he twigs that not all is as it should be with London; as Dream London is taking over.

Jim is commissioned to unearth the truth behind Dream London. Nothing remains the same from one day to the next: towers grow taller overnight; parks wither and hide; popular tourist attractions change in appearance and location, and people don't even seem human anymore. Jim foolishly relies on his charm to play one gang off against the other, believing that he is in control and one step ahead, but Dream London has other ideas, and before long Jim is knee-deep in it.

Tony Ballantyne's latest offering presents a world so strange that it rivals *Brazil* director Terry Gilliam in its portrayal of the weird and wonderful. As well as the geographical changes, there is an array of equally oddball supporting characters to keep Jim on the run, the standout being a potty-mouthed six-year-old girl, who hilariously shouts profanities and threatens Jim with all sorts of obscenities.

Somewhere among the pages of *Dream London* is a message and a journey of self-discovery. However, a word to the wise: don't even try to second-guess what is going on; just enjoy the ride.

Claire Nicholls

VERDICT ★★★★★



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

Jago

Kim Newman

A young couple find a sinister West Country village about to host the mother of all festivals.

Details Author: Antoine Rouaud Publisher: Gollancz Price: £14.99

THE PATH OF ANGER

Debut fantasy author sees red

The Path Of Anger (the first part of a new fantasy series called *The Book And The Swords*), the debut novel from Antoine Rouaud, is an old-fashioned, somewhat no-nonsense sword-and-subterfuge romp.

It's the tale of a grizzled old veteran named Dun-Cadal, who has frittered his life away for the past number of years. He's a grumpy old git, but to be fair he's been through a lot, and lost people. Rouaud casts him in a sympathetic light, as he's at least somewhat multi-faceted and three-dimensional, though sometimes to the detriment of other characters who aren't anywhere near as fleshed out.

A historian by the name of Viola comes knocking, asking for the whereabouts of Eraed,

the sword of the last emperor. This stirs up a hornet's nest, though, and they're soon both entangled in a series of murder mysteries, as old acquaintances of Dun-Cadal get killed off.

Rouaud has a talent for character depiction, as you get a real sense of how tired and jaded Dun-Cadal is. You could imagine Charles Bronson or Oliver Reed playing him. He's not totally without merit either, as a more paternalistic side to his character emerges as the novel goes on.

Without giving too much away, *The Path Of Anger* ends on a note that leaves plenty of scope for sequels; books that are now to be anticipated, as Rouaud clearly has something. It may ramble on, and the



dialogue is stilted and somewhat humourless, but he more than adequately gets his point across.

Rouaud's next few steps down this path will be intriguing to see. Let's hope he has a bit more fun with it next time.

Daniel Cairns

VERDICT ★★★★★



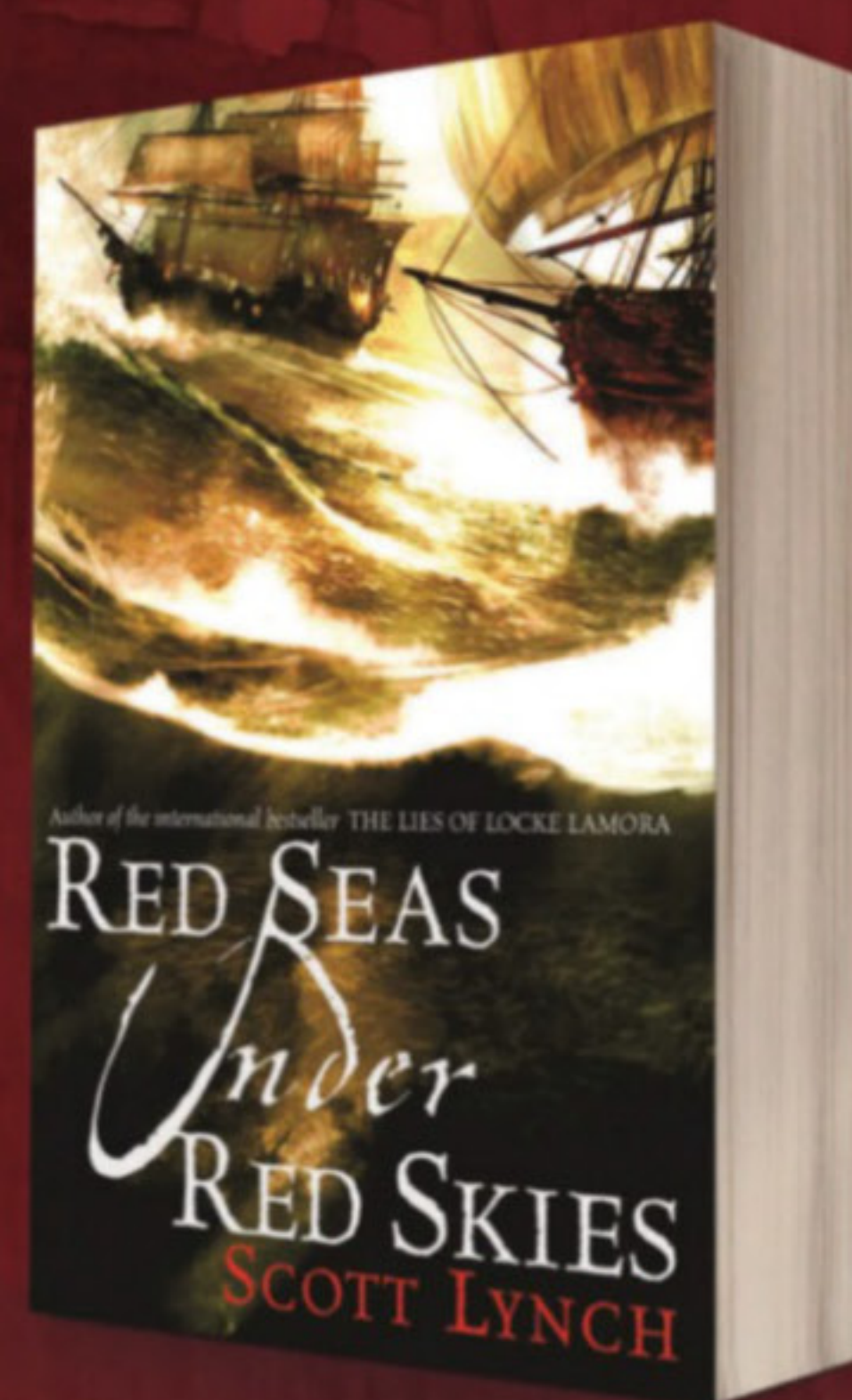
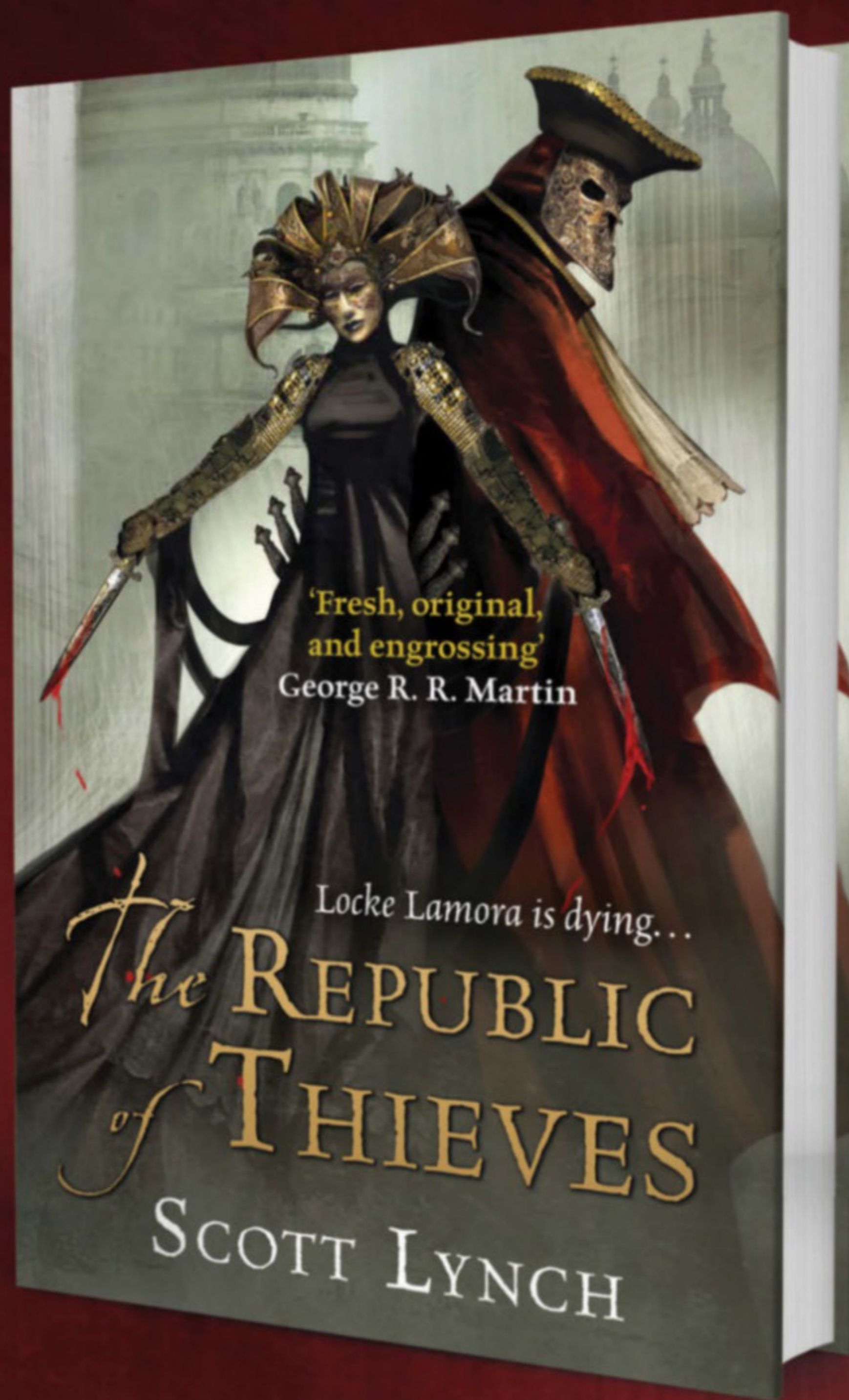
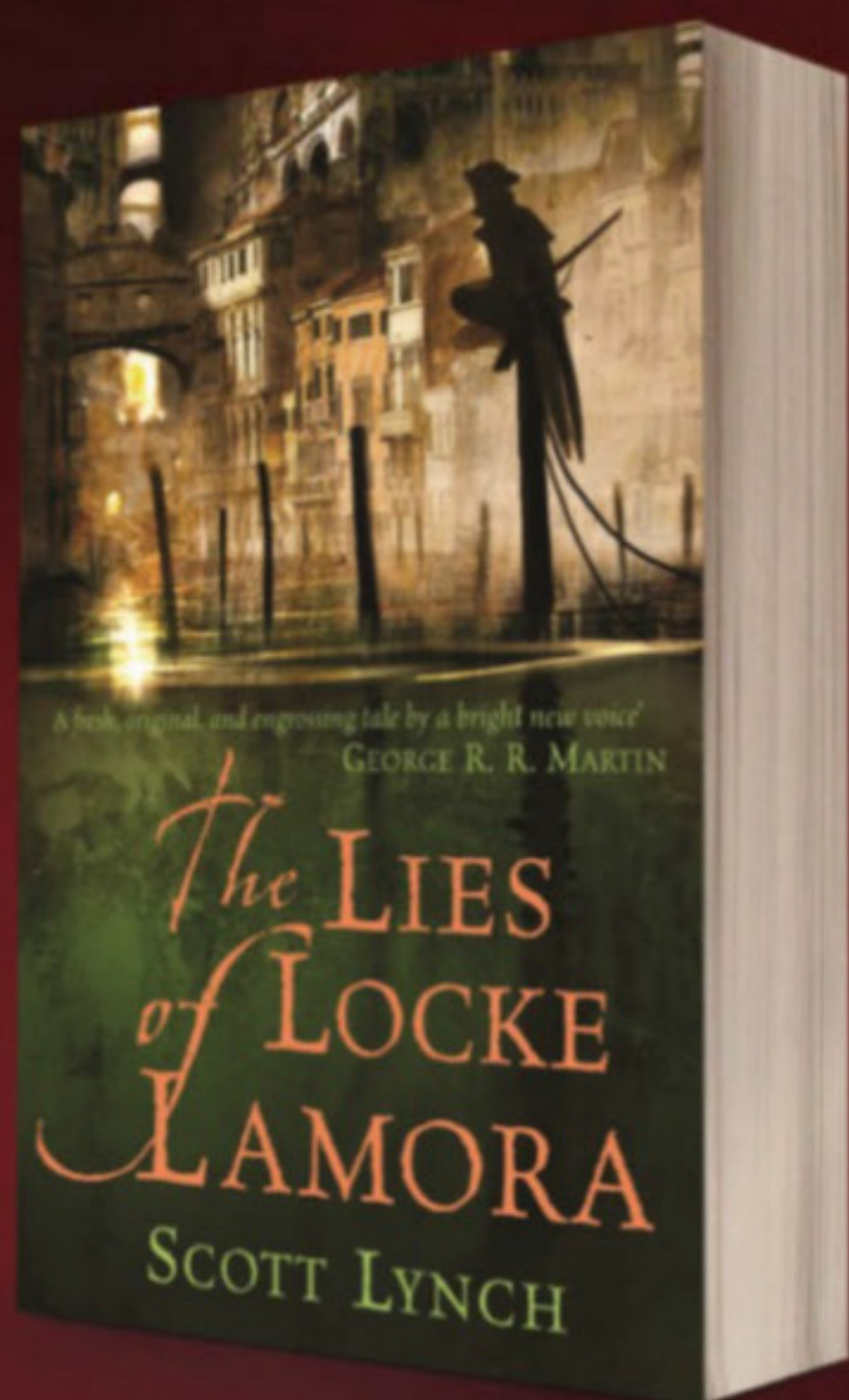
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

The Blade Itself

Joe Abercrombie

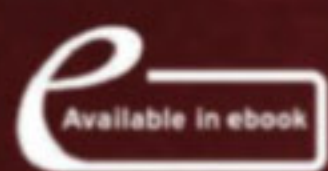
An adult fantasy with bite and intrigue from the genre's crown prince.

The most anticipated fantasy
novel of the year is here



“Fresh, original, engrossing . . .
a bright new voice in the fantasy genre”

George R.R. Martin



Out now where all good books are sold



Details Author: Tom Huddleston Publisher: David Fickling Books Price: £11.99

THE FUTURE KING: THE WAKING WORLD

Waterworld in King Arthur's court

The legend of King Arthur has had many re-imaginings, most recently in the BBC's fondly remembered *Merlin*. Tom Huddleston courts a similar young adult audience, but sets his series in the far future, not the mythical past.

In *The Future King: The Waking World*, rising sea levels have all but washed Britain away, leaving northern England an island. Those that survived the catastrophe hid underground, returning to the surface centuries later as feudal fiefdoms.

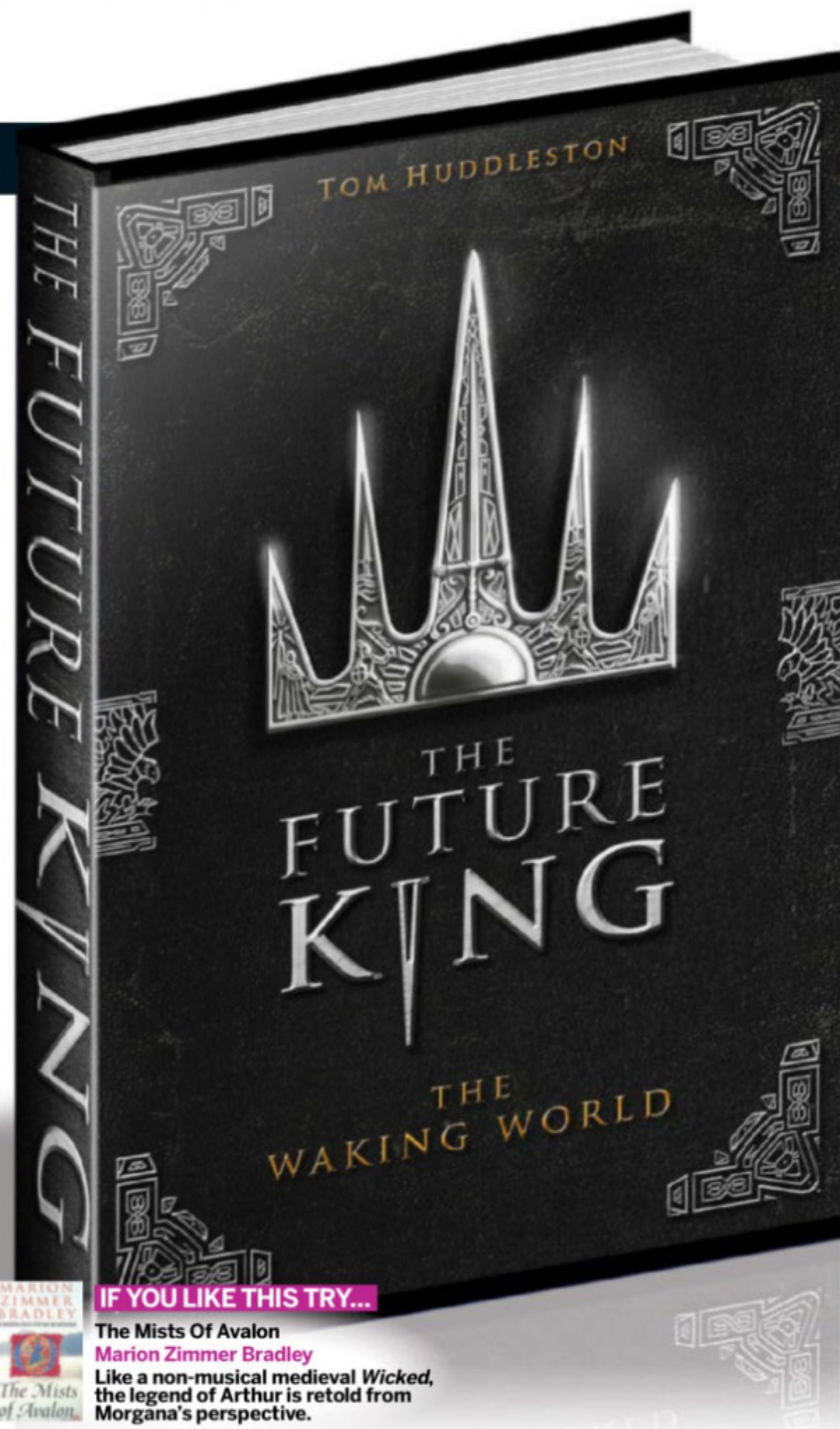
Teenager Aran Carifax is the son of a wealthy clan leader known as a Law. He dreams of being a warrior like his older brother, but as the younger son he's expected only to manage the farms. A chance encounter with the mysterious figure Peregrine changes everything, as Aran discovers it's his destiny to unite the divided Laws and repel the invading Viking-like horde known as the Marauders.

The Future King blends a coming-of-age story with swords and sorcery that clearly takes its lead from *Harry Potter*. Aran's sidekicks Cas and Mohanna are just Ron with book smarts and a sword-wielding Hermione respectively. There is even a Quidditch-like sport called Longball. Aran, however, is a realistic portrait of maturing adolescence, and lessons about violence not being the only answer are deftly delivered so they don't sound hackneyed.

As with many adaptations, *The Future King* struggles because we know how the story is going to end. But when the author allows himself to deviate from the legend he excels. For instance, the Marauders and their floating cities are enthralling, and he sets up multiple mysteries, including Peregrine's strange origins, that will keep the reader wanting more.

Jack Parsons

VERDICT ★★★★★



Details Author: Chris Nashawaty Publisher: Abrams Price: £13.39

CRAB MONSTERS, TEENAGE CAVEMEN AND CANDY STRIPE NURSES

The cult of Corman

Roger Corman's achievements speak for themselves, and it's refreshing to see them do just that in Chris Nashawaty's beautifully designed tome, which steps back to let the people who knew and worked with the schlockmeister share their insights.

For those who have seen 2011 documentary *Corman's World*, much of this will seem familiar, with some anecdotes recycled by their tellers word for word. It's in commenting on the working environment and the impact Corman had on the careers of many graduates of the 'Corman School' – like James Cameron and Gale Anne Hurd – that gives



Crab Monsters its raison d'être, making it a valuable contribution to any cinephile's library.

James Hoare

VERDICT ★★★★★

Details Author: Frank Lesser Publisher: Souvenir Press Price: £6.99

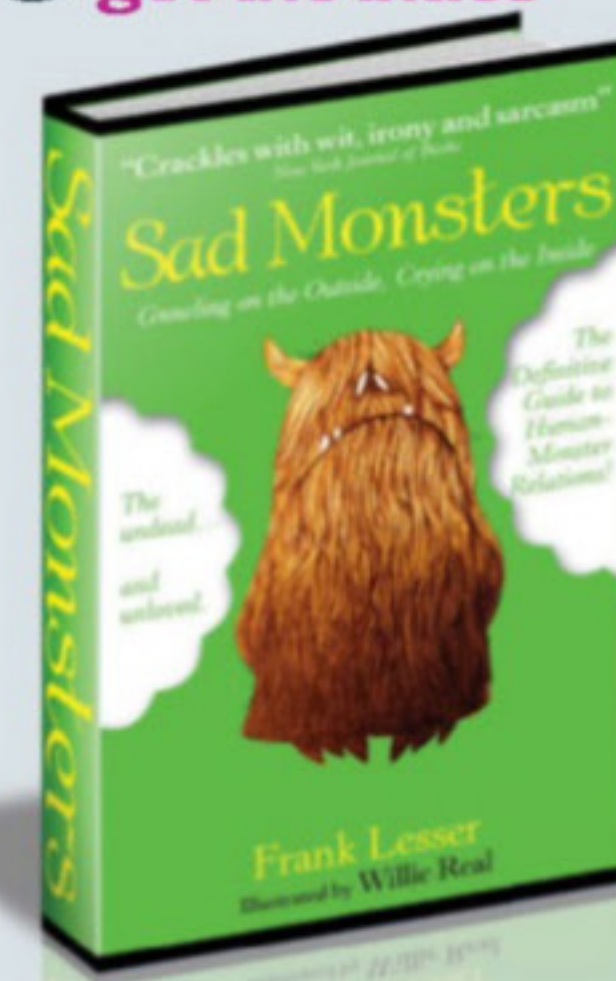
SAD MONSTERS

Even giant lizards get the blues

How do you heal a broken heart when you are undead? There's plenty more poignant and thought-provoking questions like this in *Sad Monsters*, a guide to human-monster relations.

It's a novel spin on paranormal romance to say the least, and we fell head over heels for the concept. The writer takes monsters from literature and television, and imagines the bizarre secret lives they might lead. For instance, Big Foot has a problem with Megan Fox, and Godzilla's got parental issues. One of our favourite little-known facts is that when teenagers abstain from sex, they wind up with a unicorn BFF! "Why do you think good girls don't mind 9pm curfews? I'll give you one hint: unicorn slumber parties!"

The book is divided into short chapters with varying formats, including manuscripts, letters,



diary entries and even classified ads, accompanied by gorgeous *New Yorker*-style cartoons. *Sad Monsters* is hugely imaginative, and while it won't win you any literary points, or extra brain cells for that matter, it will definitely make you giggle.

Jodie Tyley

VERDICT ★★★★★

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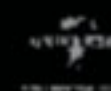
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KEANU REEVES

47 RONIN

IN CINEMAS BOXING DAY



Details Writers: Alan Moore, Malcolm McLaren, Antony Johnston
Artist: Facundo Percio **Publisher:** Avatar Press **Price:** £12.72

FASHION BEAST

V For Vogue

Fashion Beast is a rare echo from a happier age before Alan Moore's myriad creative disputes took hold and when his crusading spirit and mythologised storytelling embraced conventional narratives. Conceived by Malcolm McLaren – the fashion/media impresario who first stuck a price tag on punk rock and put it up on a rack in Carnaby Street – as a movie script in 1985, he handed Moore the outline and characters, and only now, thanks to Avatar Press, frequent Moore collaborator Antony Johnston (*Wasteland*, *Daredevil*) and artist Facundo Percio (*Anna Mercury*) is it seeing the light of day.

Written concurrently with *Watchmen* a few years after the release of *V For Vendetta*, *Fashion Beast* has a great deal in common with both. Beyond the fashion industry fetishism and pseudo-punk gender subversion projected by McLaren, it's about the collapse of a decaying old order, a jingoistic and self-absorbed parody of Eighties excess, and against this backdrop an aspiring model and fashion designer begin their love/hate relationship and fairy tale ascent (*Beauty And The Beast* and *Cinderella*, specifically) that simultaneously brings down a totalitarian regime.

All the touches of peak-era Moore are there, most notably the grotty banality of supporting characters and clever visual gags that foreshadow the big themes and



plot developments, but it's by no means as dense texturally – perhaps belying its origins as a screenplay and the telltale sign of another pair of hands upon it.

Read nearly three decades on, and it feels more like something written in the style of Moore rather than something actually written by Moore. But saying that, something written in the style of Moore at his peak is infinitely preferable to something being written by Moore right now.

James Hoare
VERDICT ★★★★★



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
Albion
Leah Moore and John Reppion/
Dave Gibbons
Plotted by Moore, this is similarly
reminiscent of his past glories.



Details Writers: Al Ewing, Simon Spurrier, Rob Williams **Artists:** Henry Flint, Simon Coleby, D'Israeli, Carl Critchlow **Publisher:** Rebellion **Price:** £13.39

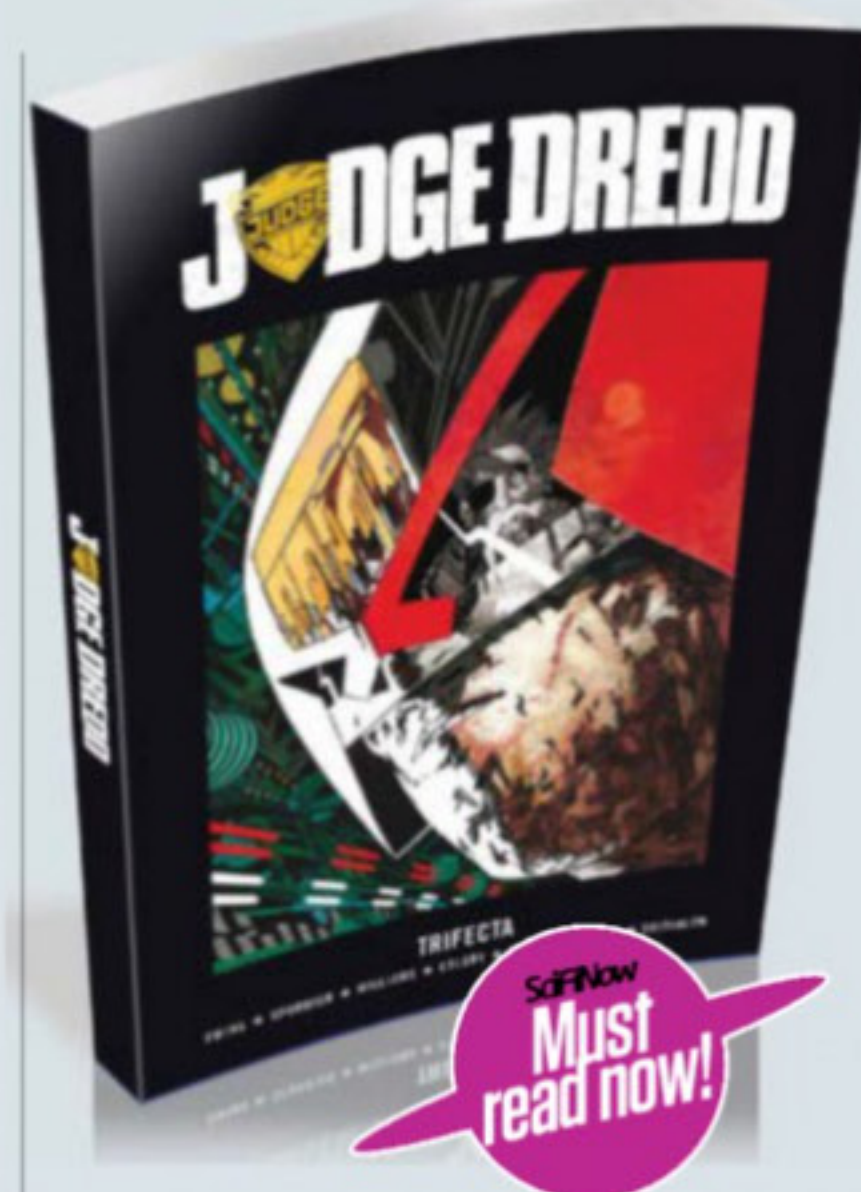
JUDGE DREDD: TRIFECTA

Three colours Dredd

The best thing about *Trifecta* is the reveal; the way three seemingly unrelated stories centered around disparate characters within the wider sphere of Mega-City One's Justice Department come together – iron-fisted archetype Judge Dredd, flim-noir clown Jack Point and delusional vagrant Dirty Frank – across their own stories like *2000 AD*'s own *Pulp Fiction*.

The surprise is shot through the head with Hi-Ex by grouping them together in one volume, but *Trifecta* remains a sublime piece of writing, and the labyrinth of twists within the story have more than enough surprises to make

**“REMAINS A
 SUBLIME PIECE
 OF WRITING”**



up for missing out on the big one. Dredd himself may be infamously inflexible, but *Trifecta* is a vital reminder of just how many styles of storytelling his wild and wonderful world can support.

James Hoare
VERDICT ★★★★★

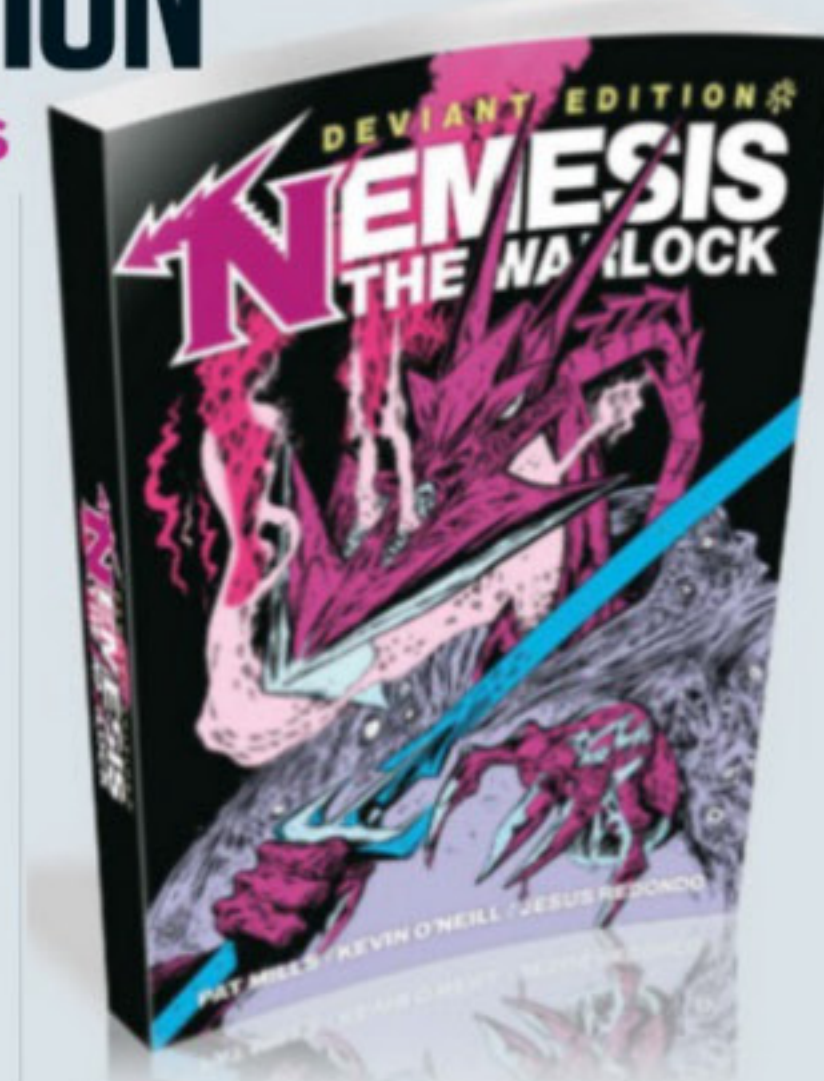
Details Writer: Pat Mills **Artist:** Kevin O'Neill **Publisher:** Rebellion **Price:** £19.20

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK: DEVIANT EDITION

Hammer of the Witches

Collecting the fan-favourite colourised Eagle Comics reprints (can we get the *Dredd* ones with the gorgeous Brian Bolland covers next, please?) of Pat Mills' cult *Nemesis The Warlock*, it's striking how much of the strip contributed to making the *Warhammer 40,000* universe so idiosyncratic.

The story of an alien-hating, dogmatic future humanity defied by an alien sorcerer, *Nemesis* is fantastically atmospheric and evocatively constructed, with lovely baroque character design from Kevin O'Neill (*League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen*), but like many of the classic strips there's a total absence of sympathetic characterisation or emotional



range. Spend time with Pat Mills' other great heathen outsider as he takes on organised religion instead: Sláine.

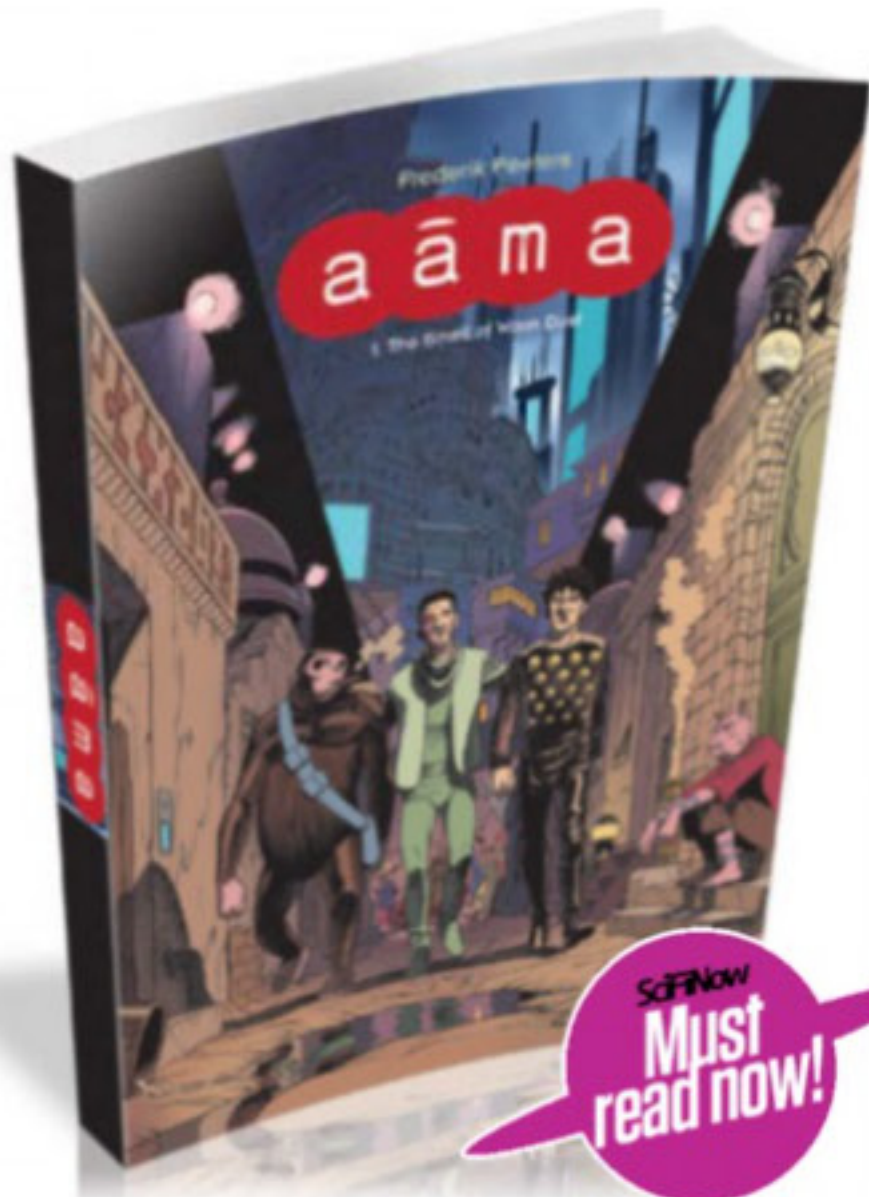
James Hoare
VERDICT ★★★★★



Details Writer: Frederik Peeters Artist: Frederik Peeters Publisher: SelfMadeHero Price: £12.99

AAMA VOL 1: THE SMELL OF WARM DUST

A space oddity



A man awakens in a dusty scrub, strange visions flitting across his dreamscape and his memories a haze. A robot gorilla puffing on a cigar strolls out to meet him, missing his gorilla trousers – showing bizarrely bare human legs. Mere pages into the first volume, and we're being set up for some quality

abstraction, the sort of thing that the French-language Bande dessinée comics scene has built its reputation on. Just look to the potent allegory of Bong Joon-ho's *Snowpiercer*, which like the graphic novel it's based on (*Le Transperceneige* by Jacques Lob & Benjamin Legrand and Jean-Marc Rochette) proudly thumbs its nose at all conventional world-building logic.

AAMA, written and drawn by Swiss creator Frederik Peeters (*Blue Pills*, *Sandcastles*), is surprising simply because of how conventional it is in contrast to the likes of *The Incal* or *Cities Of The Fantastic*. From the surreal opening to the more languid setup, we're shown an Earth where unaugmented humans are the minority, coveting books as relics of a more civilised age. Deadbeat dad Verloc – our future amnesiac – is at rock-bottom, the book shop he inherited stripped bare and his daughter kept at arm's length by the authorities. Conrad, his brother,

takes pity on him, and alongside his robo-ape partner Churchill they set off to a research station on a frontier world to recover a transformative substance from the squabbling scientists, rogue robots and the mysterious girl who looks exactly like Verloc's daughter.

With echoes of beard-tugging Sixties space epics *Solaris* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*, this journey grows steadily odder and more significant as it progresses. Pacing itself deftly, it may be a well-worn tool to use the amnesiac present day Verloc to effectively present the narrative as he discovers it himself through his diary, but it tethers the story, giving it a conventional frame that should reassure the wary. Like Peeters' sublime and moving *Sandcastle* – also available from boutique graphic novel publishers SelfMadeHero – AAMA keeps the characters and their mundane reactions and relationships in the foreground, leading us gently into steadily stranger territory.

Peeters' character design and art style is pleasantly cartoonish – even echoing *Tintin* in places where Verloc bounces across the alien surfaces in his fishbowl space helmet, bringing a lightness to the concepts and world-building that manages to evoke *Dune*-style space opera without the density and the slog – more George Lucas than David Lynch, then.

Like all the truly wonderful cosmic fables, Frederik Peeters' AAMA makes the smallest things important. It draws the reader into his incredible world while moving the plot forward just enough to make this first volume feel satisfying, but with enough still unseen to raise expectations for the second and the continued unravelling of this incredible saga.

James Hoare

VERDICT ★★★★★

"DUNE-STYLE SPACE OPERA WITHOUT THE DENSITY AND THE SLOG"



Your Five Cosmic Comics



TELL US YOUR FAVOURITES @SCIFINOW



1. X-O Manowar

Robert Venditti/Cary Nord

"My favourite is X-O Manowar by @ValiantComics. It's a space-bound comic with a grand, compelling story

and gorgeous art. #BookClub"

@The7thMatrix



2. Saga

Brian K Vaughan/Fiona Staples

"Saga by Brian K Vaughan and Fiona Staples. Epic, space, love, sex and violence! #BookClub"

@thelilperson



3. Dan Dare

Gerry Finley-Day/Dave Gibbons

"I have a soft spot for the early @2000AD Dan Dare – freaky aliens

from Belardinelli, great space opera from @davegibbons90 #BookClub"

@RobbieCarnegie



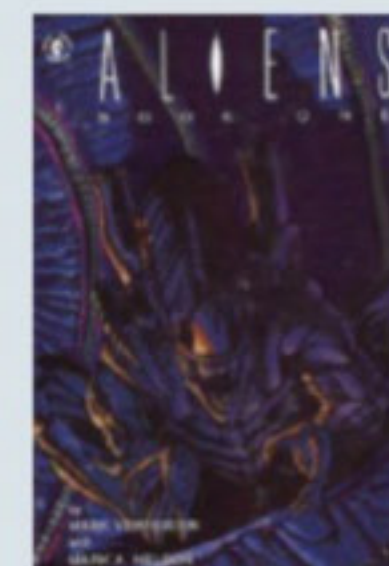
4. Flash Gordon

Dan Barry/Harvey Kurtzman

"I've got a soft spot for Dan Barry's run on Flash Gordon. Incredible art and non-stop

high adventure #BookClub"

@joseviruete



5. Aliens

Mark A Nelson/Mark Verheiden

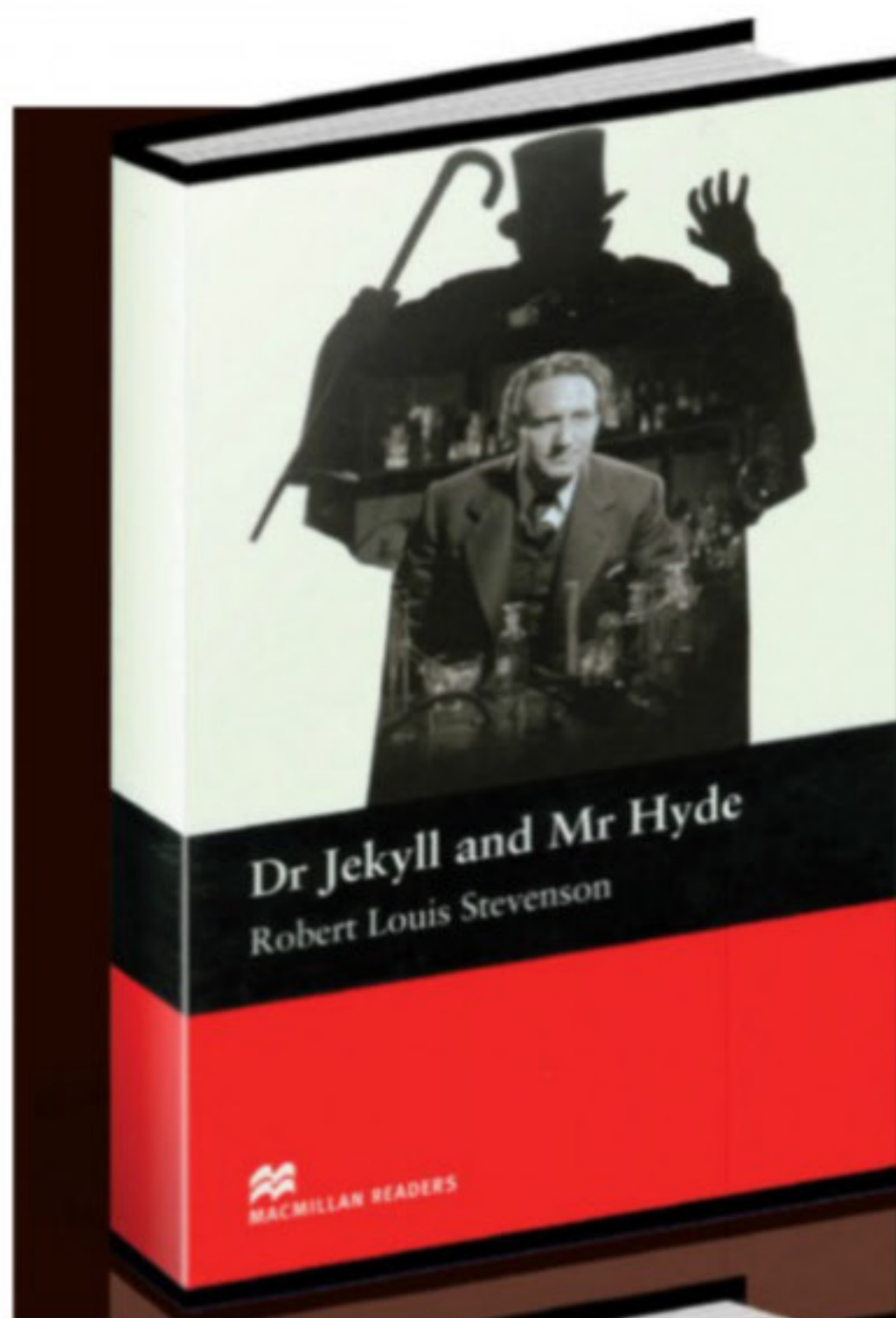
"They continued the adventures of Hicks and Newt and were a great alternative to Alien 3. #BookClub"

@SoundtrekLITM

WHAT HORRIFIES HORROR'S FINEST?

WORDS JODIE TYLEY

From Ramsey Campbell to Susan Hill, some of the most respected horror authors in the industry share their favourite spine chillers...



STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Published: 1886

Synopsis: This 'shilling shocker' is the story of the respectable Dr Jekyll and his association with the dark and damnable character of Edward Hyde. Concerned by his friend's behaviour, Jekyll's lawyer Mr Utterson tries to uncover the mystery of Mr Hyde in what becomes an unnerving psychological fantasy.



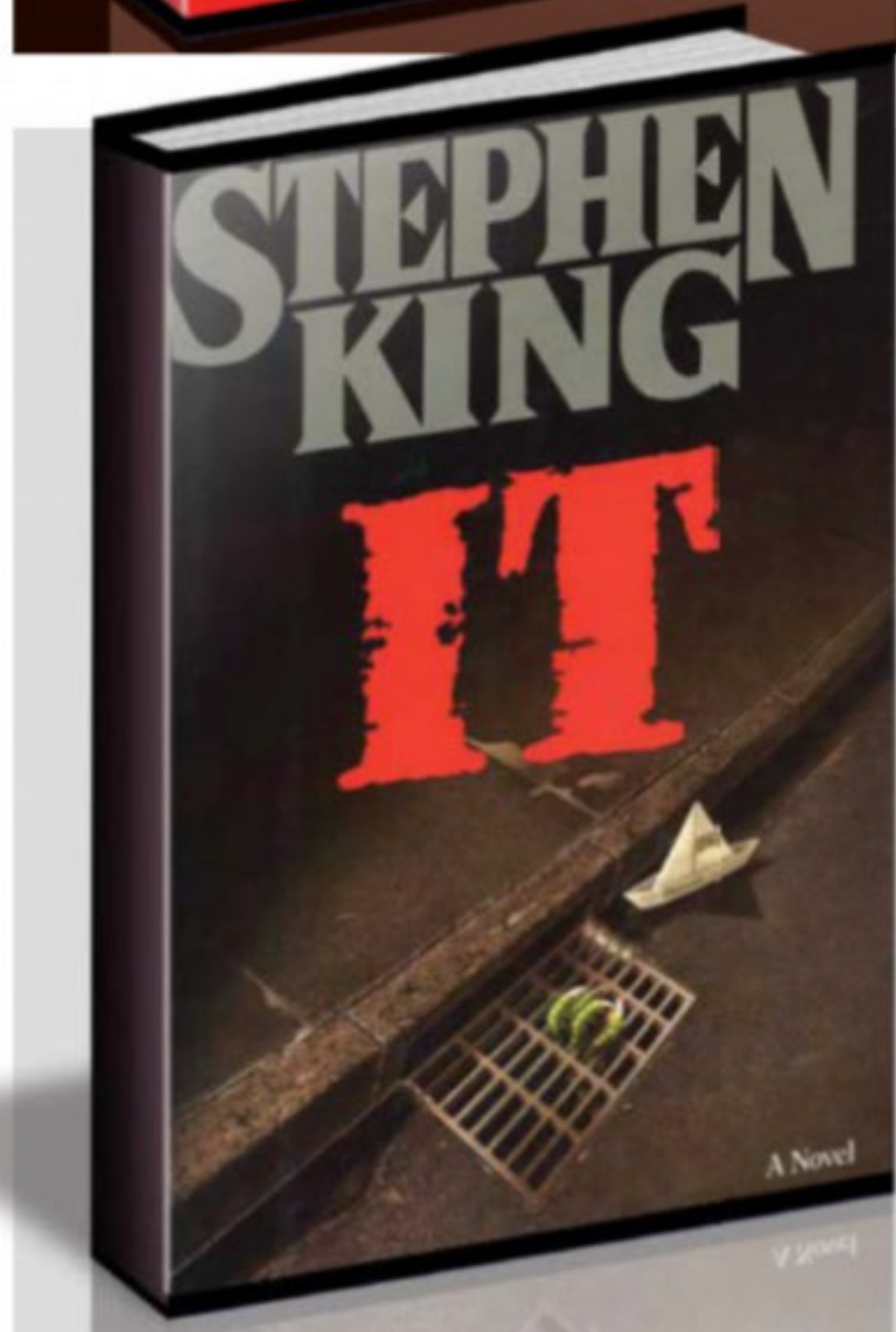
RECOMMENDED BY:

Susan Hill, author of *The Woman in Black*
"I was chilled when I read it, and still am... The way Stevenson tells it, so elegantly and coolly, yet ratcheting up the horror is the lesson in how to do it, and the setting, mainly at night in old Edinburgh, is perfect. But it's the character of Jekyll/Hyde that is triumphant, because we are horrified and repelled, yet understanding. I have never read a finer example of the genre. Terrifying and superb."

"I HAVE NEVER READ A FINER
EXAMPLE OF THE GENRE"

SUSAN HILL

Susan Hill's new ghost story, titled *Printer's Devil Yard*, is available to download now, exclusively on Amazon Kindle.



IT

STEPHEN KING

Published: 1986

Synopsis: Seven children are preyed on by a malevolent force that exploits their fears and phobias in order to disguise itself while feeding. The entity, referred to in the story as 'It', emerges from its hibernation every 30 years, and usually appears in the form of a demonic clown referring to itself as 'Pennywise the Dancing Clown' in order to appeal to the youngsters of the town of Derry. Having attempted and failed to kill It as children, events conspire to force a group of friends to try to finish what they started all those years ago.



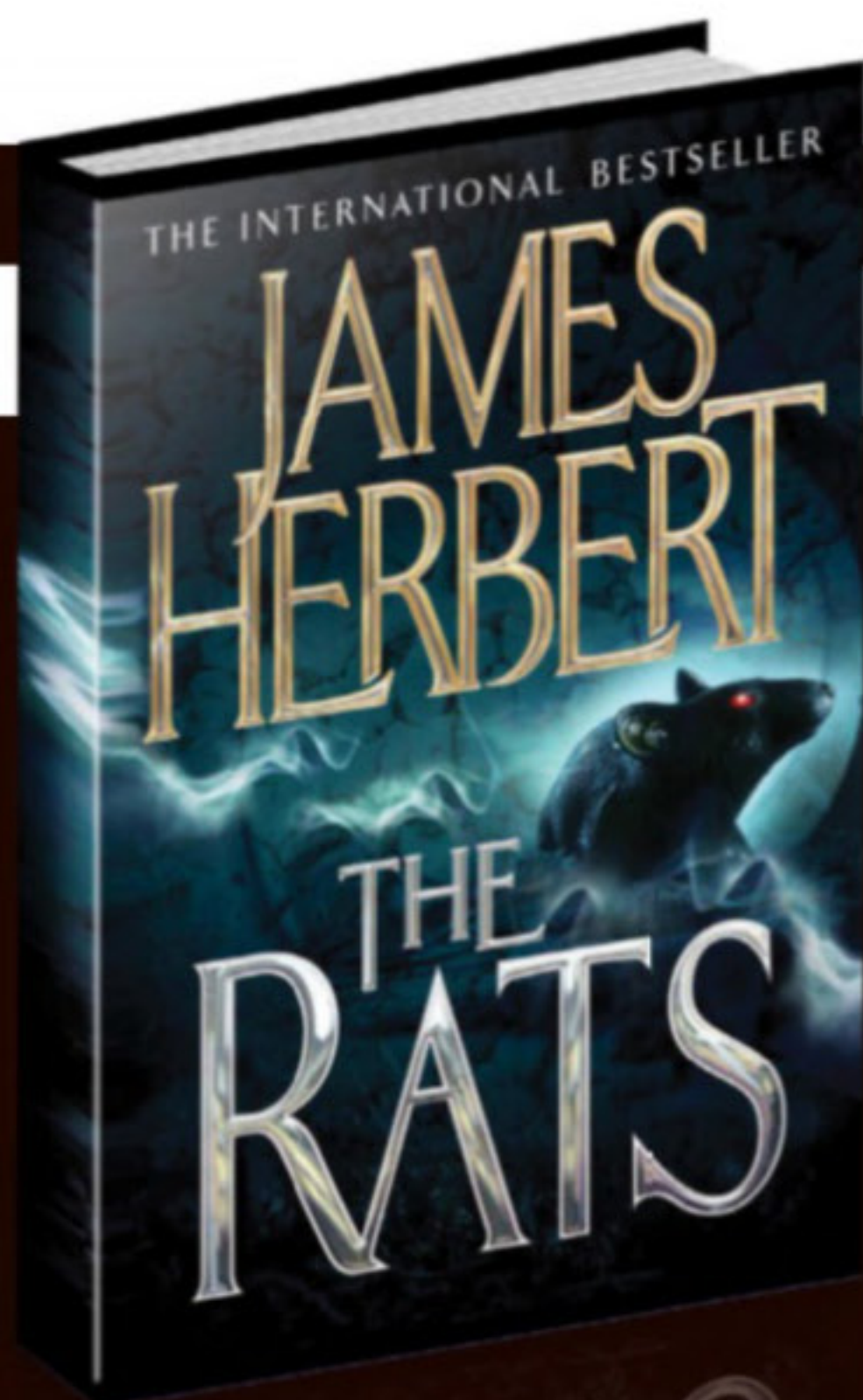
RECOMMENDED BY:

Mira Grant, author of the Newsflesh series
"The first time I read *It*, I was the age of the kids in the Losers' Club, and now I'm the age of them as adults. It's about faith, fear and learning to live with the reality that sometimes monsters are less scary than men, because at least monsters are comprehensible when they decide to eat you. *It* can still frighten me, but I admit, I read it more for comfort than chills. I have so much of it memorised."

"I'VE GROWN UP WITH THIS STORY
SENDING BRAMBLES THROUGH
MY HEART"

MIRA GRANT

Mira Grant's *Parasite* is out now, published by Orbit.



THE RATS JAMES HERBERT

Published: 1974

Synopsis: There's gore galore in this apocalyptic tale about rat attacks in London. The rodents are mutating and hunting down humans in packs, piercing skin with their sharp yellow teeth. We follow the story of Harris, a schoolteacher who uses his local knowledge to help scientists to defeat the plague.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Kelley Armstrong, author of the *Women Of The Otherworld* series

"I moved from children's fiction to horror and fantasy when I was about 12, an age where I

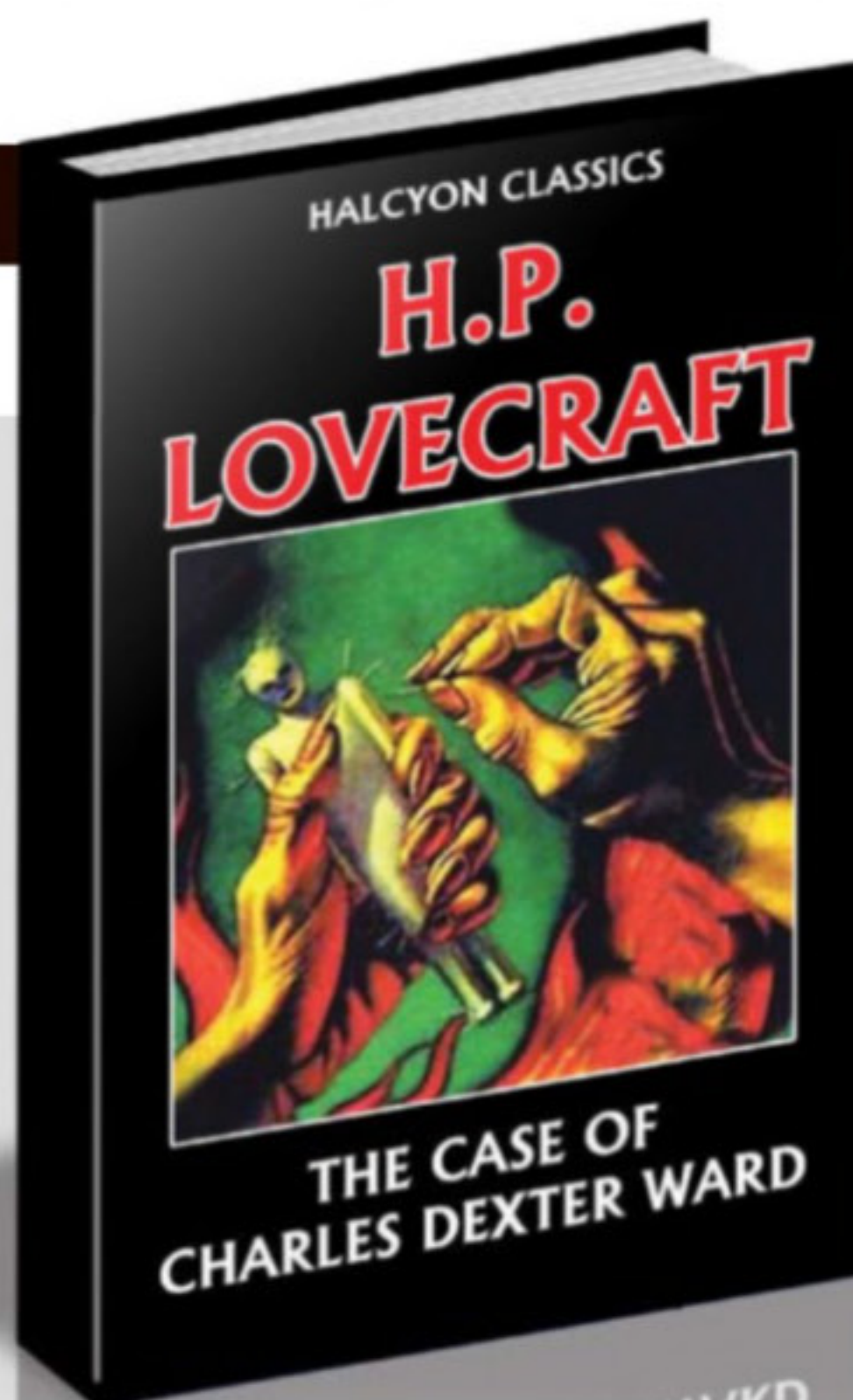
mostly devoured Stephen King novels. Then, while I was at a flea market, looking for more King in the used bookstalls, I came across *The Rats*. It definitely didn't look like my usual fare, but at 13 I was feeling brave.

"To say I liked it might be an exaggeration. I have several rat scenes in my own books; not nearly as graphic, but clearly I'm trying to work through something. While I wouldn't pick *The Rats* as my favourite horror novel, it's definitely one that I remember with remarkable clarity, 30 years later."

"TO SAY I LIKED IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN EXAGGERATION"

KELLEY ARMSTRONG

Kelley Armstrong's latest book, *Omens*, is available now, published by Sphere.



THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD

HP LOVECRAFT

Published: 1941

Synopsis: The titular protagonist begins researching an ancestor whose identity is mysteriously wiped from town records. When Ward discovers that he is in fact related to a notorious black magic practitioner, he tries to follow in his footsteps by carrying out his own experiments. What results could be madness, or a case of identity theft from the past.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Ramsey Campbell, author of *Midnight Sun*

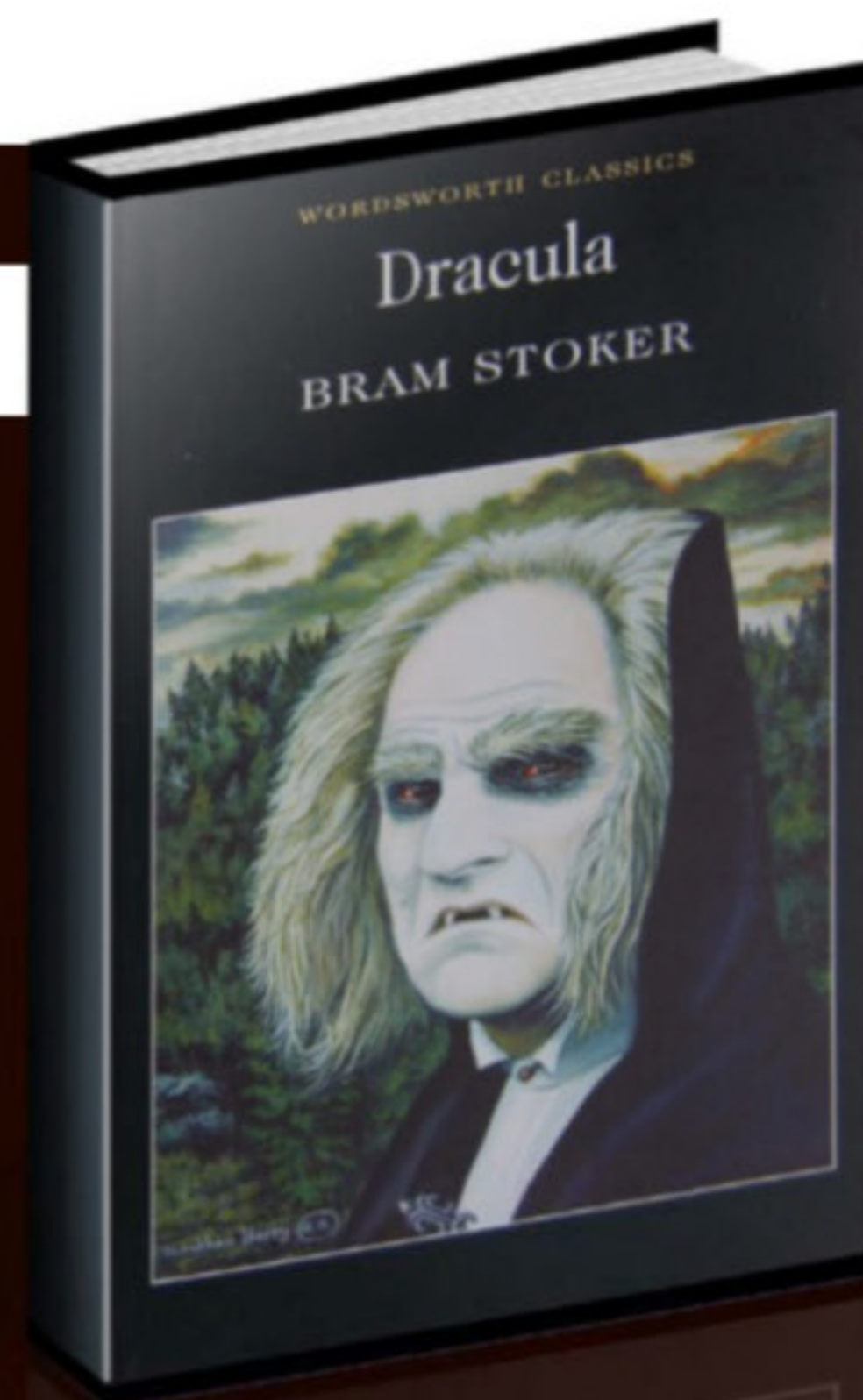
"Of Lovecraft's hugely varied attempts to find the perfect form for the supernatural horror story, this is the only full-length novel.

From its lyrical opening, it turns into one of his most carefully constructed and powerful tales of terror, which justifies and benefits greatly from its length. The book also reminds us that Lovecraft didn't need Cthulhu and the rest of the mythos to convey cosmic horror; there's scarcely a reference to it in this book. I'll admit I used it as a model when I tried to write a Lovecraftian novel, *The Darkest Part Of The Woods*."

"ONE OF LOVECRAFT'S MOST POWERFUL TALES OF TERROR"

RAMSEY CAMPBELL

Ramsey Campbell's *The Last Revelation Of Gla'aki* is available now from PS Publishing.



DRACULA BRAM STOKER

Published: 1897

Synopsis: This iconic Gothic novel is stitched together from multiple narratives consisting of diary entries, letters and other scribbles, beginning with the personal musings of English solicitor Jonathan Harker as he journeys to Transylvania in order to meet a mysterious new client, Count Dracula. He soon realises that he is effectively being held prisoner in the castle, and must try to escape the nefarious Count's clutches.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Jack Ketchum, author of *Off Season*

"My favourite horror novel would probably be my first, *Dracula*, because that one started it all for me. I read it in one sitting on my very first

airplane trip from New York to Los Angeles, in a total state of dread. I kept shushing my father whenever he wanted to point something out for me to see out the window. I was flying on wholly different wings."

"DRACULA WAS THE ONE THAT STARTED IT ALL FOR ME. I READ IT IN ONE SITTING"

JACK KETCHUM

Jack Ketchum's *I'm Not Sam* (co-written with Lucky McKee) is available now from Sinister Grim Press.

FEED YOUR MIND

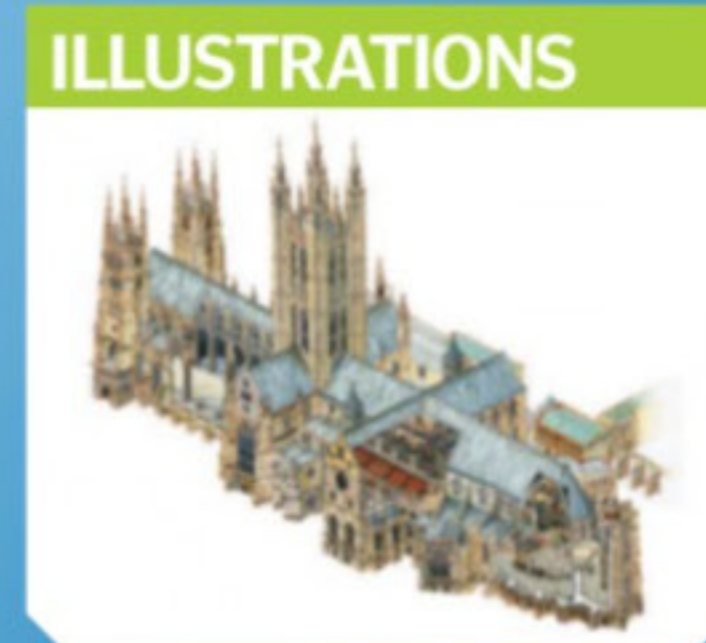
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Captain Scarlet Darkman Tales From The Crypt

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AN IMAGINE
MONTHLY



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO EC COMICS

FROM HORROR AND SCI-FI TO SATIRE, EC COMICS PUSHED THE LIMITS OF ACCEPTABILITY IN FIFTIES AMERICA WITH ICONIC TITLES LIKE TALES FROM THE CRYPT, WEIRD FANTASY AND THE VAULT OF HORROR. SO SHOCKING, CONTROVERSIAL AND VIVID WERE THESE DEPICTIONS OF BLOODLETTING, INFIDELITY AND DELINQUENCY THAT EVENTUALLY THEY HAD TO BE STOPPED. IN A SERIES OF NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN INTERVIEWS, WE REVISIT THE GORY DAYS OF EC COMICS...

WORDS JOE NAZZARO

In an industry dominated by costumed superheroes, it's hard to believe that there was once a company that thrived with nary a caped crusader to be found. In the Forties and Fifties, EC Comics published a wildly diverse line of romance, crime, parody, science fiction and horror comics. The latter books, which became hugely controversial at the time, eventually outlived their original format, spawning several feature films and a long-running television series – not to mention a quirky little book called *Mad*, which went on to become the world's top-selling humour magazine.

In 1947, 25-year-old William Gaines inherited the Educational Comics (subsequently changed to Entertaining Comics) line after the death of his father, MC Gaines, in a boating accident. The younger Gaines, who had been studying to be a teacher at New York University after a stint in the army, was suddenly the publisher of a lacklustre line of romance and 'kiddie' comics that was already \$100,000 in the red.

After a few months of signing cheques, Gaines decided to give publishing a go. Early attempts to launch a series of new romance comics (with the help of a young artist named Al Feldstein) were unsuccessful, and so were launches of crime and Western books. It wasn't until he started thinking about his own boyhood influences that things started to come together.

"When I was a kid," Gaines explained in an extensive 1990 interview. "I used to read the pulp magazines and horror and science fiction magazines. When I became a publisher, I went into what I liked as a kid, which was horror and science fiction."

**"IN THE FIFTIES,
ONLY KIDS READ
HORROR COMICS
AND THE ADULTS
YELLED THEIR HEADS
OFF AT THE POOR
KIDS FOR READING
THEM"**

WILLIAM GAINES

By the end of 1949, Gaines and Feldstein had become good friends outside their New York office, and they began talking about their mutual love for the scary radio dramas they listened to as kids. Some of those shows featured hosts that introduced the

stories, including 'Raymond,' (Raymond Johnson) the punster host of *The Inner Sanctum*, and an old witch named Nancy, who introduced the aptly named *The Witch's Tale*.

Gaines and Feldstein decided to try a similar experiment, introducing 'An Illustrated Terror Tale From The Crypt Of Terror' and 'An Illustrated Terror Tale From The Vault Of Horror' in issues of *Crime Patrol* and *War Against Crime!* The former was introduced by a character called the Crypt-Keeper, the latter by the Vault-Keeper.

As Feldstein recalls of his early depiction of the Crypt-Keeper in the new biography *Feldstein: The Mad Life And Fantastic Art Of Al Feldstein*, "I didn't know exactly what I was doing with this guy; I just wanted to have him scary and eerie, so I had his hair hanging all over his face like Al Capp's Shmoo [a character from the comic strip 'Li'l Abner']". And that was the beginning."

While it was still too early to determine if the experiment was a success, Gaines immediately ordered similar content for the next issues of both books. By May/June 1950, *Crime Patrol* had been changed to *The Crypt Of Terror* and then *Tales From The Crypt*, while *War Against Crime!* became *The Vault Of Horror* and *Gunfighter* was renamed *The Haunt Of Fear* (the books retained their numbering to avoid paying for a new second class mail permit, a strategy that worked for a limited time). The second issue of *The Haunt* ➤





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THE CRYPTKEEPER GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

How EC Comics made a big screen debut and a small screen comeback



The EC Comics line may have ended in the Fifties, but it wasn't long before some of those stories made their way into other areas of popular culture. Two decades later, producer Milton Subotsky approached Gaines about a possible series of films, which became *Tales From The Crypt* (1972) and *The Vault Of Horror* (1973). As Gaines recalls, "Somebody walked in and wanted to do them. My big fight was I was supposed to have script approval. After the first one was successful and the second one wasn't, I refused to do any more films with them. That was the end of it until Joel Silver came in with his idea for doing them."

In the late Eighties, producer Joel Silver (*Lethal Weapon*, *The Matrix*) bought the rights for a big chunk of the EC library for a new television series to be made on HBO, where the pay cable venue allowed for plenty of gratuitous blood and gore.

"This guy Silver originally made a deal for a *Tales From The Crypt* movie," he remembers. "Years went by and he never got the movie done, but he kept buying the options until he finally came in and said, 'Look, I can't do the movie, but I want to make a TV show out of it!' I said 'Fine', and we changed the contract. A couple more years went by because he was so busy, but he finally got to it, and I think he did an incredible job."

"The only thing Silver didn't get was the title 'Weird Science', because I had already sold that, but I sold him all the other stories, all the comic-book stuff, even the 'new direction' stuff like *Psychoanalysis*. I didn't know what he was going to do with it, but he wanted everything."

Tales From The Crypt ultimately ran for seven seasons and nearly 100 episodes, as well as a series of feature films. Unlike the Subotsky movies, Gaines remained a big supporter of the new version. "The British pictures did it all wrong," he claims. "They didn't use the Crypt-Keeper at all; it was just a way of putting five stories together, but Silver did it the way it should be done."

He had a Cryptkeeper; he had a crypt and a fantastic opening sequence that I never got tired of looking at!"



Tales From The Crypt is out now on DVD, priced at £9.95.



With the help of Feldstein's images, EC Comics became truly iconic.

AL FELDSTEIN!

INTRODUCTION

In *FELDSTEIN: The MAD Life and Fantastic Art of Al Feldstein*, we take a long-overdue look at the entire remarkable career of this legendary artist, writer, and editor. Beginning with his earliest comic book work, we follow his development from the 1940s Victor Fox shop (featuring every cover Feldstein did during this period, including the titillating "headlight" comics *Sunny*, *Junior*, and *Meet Captain Archer*) through his highly visceral work for the classic EC comic book line. We trace his thirty-year career as the editor of *MAD*, and present his post-retirement work as a fine artist, including his prize-winning Western canvases and his many commissioned paintings "revisiting" his classic cover images from the 1950s.

Like Harold Ross, the legendary editor of *The New Yorker*, Feldstein was a sometimes-controversial figure among the staff and contributors during his tenure at *MAD* magazine, where he grabbed the reins dropped by *MAD* creator Harvey Kurtzman and spearheaded the development of the magazine into the American institution it is today. A ferocious worker and a one-man dynamo, Feldstein is also something of a paradox. He can be both charming and obnoxious, encouraging of talent and ferociously critical of it, gregarious and tullen. We examine every aspect of Feldstein's long career and fascinating personal life, not all of it sweet and light.



"THE OLD JOKE WAS THAT I GOT TO WRITING SUCH HEAVY CAPTIONS THAT ALL THE CHARACTERS HAD TO BE DRAWN WITH A HUNCHBACK" AL FELDSTEIN

➤ *Of Fear* added the Old Witch, rounding out the trio of EC's horror hosts.

As the 'new trend' horror books grew in popularity, Gaines began taking an active role in creating the stories. A voracious reader himself, he would bury himself in books to come up with ideas he called 'springboards', which were written down on scraps of paper and presented to Feldstein for approval. "I would amass these springboards," Gaines continues, "and almost every day I would go in, and my first big problem was to sell Al on a springboard. I might have to go through four or five before I got to one he liked, and once I sold him on a springboard we blocked out the story very carefully."

"At that point, Al would go into the other room and write it. I would sit there with a nervous stomach, because once every 15 or 20 times, after an hour he would come bursting in saying, 'I can't write this!' and we would have to start all over. It was one story a day, four days a week, and on the fifth day we edited and put the book together; the letters page and so forth, so it was very hectic."

Once a story was finished, it was turned over to an artist based on their respective strengths, as well as the speed with



which they could turn in a finished assignment. At this point, EC had put together a top-notch stable of artists, some of who were incredibly fast, while others were equally talented but a bit more deliberate. "Johnny Craig finally got to the point where he could do a story every two months," elaborates Gaines. "If he got a little slack time we would throw him an extra one, but basically you could count on Johnny to give you an eight-page story in *Vault Of Horror* every other month, because it was a bi-monthly. He was very meticulous."

"In those days, we formularised everything: eight-seven-six-seven. In those days, virtually every EC comic was eight pages, seven pages, six pages, seven pages. We knew who would do the lead depending on which comic it was. If it was *The Vault Of Horror*, Johnny Craig did it. If it was *The Crypt Of Terror* or *Tales From The Crypt*, Jack Davis did it. If it was *The Haunt Of Fear*, Graham Ingels did it."

"Jack Kamen always got the 'Buster stories' as we called them; somewhere along the line his wife says, 'Okay Buster, let's so and so!' Graham Ingels was always good for stories that had walking corpses or slime – if you look at his art you can see the kind of stuff he was good at. Jack was cleaner and he was very fast. He was good at pretty girls, so he would do the stories about the girl double-crossing her husband or the man double-crossing his wife. It was always nice, clean art."

"Johnny Craig did the same thing in *The Vault Of Horror*: very clean art. We would visualise the story for the artist, which was a rarity. You had to have a small

group to do that, but it was very formulaised, because you had to have a formula in those days."

With the success of the horror books, Gaines continued to add new titles. In the summer of 1950, he launched his science fiction books *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy*, which while never as successful as their horror siblings nonetheless produced some of the best work in the company's history. That autumn, he added the crime book *Crime Suspense Stories*, and a few months later an adventure book called *Two-Fisted Tales*. The latter was overseen by writer/artist Harvey Kurtzman, a notorious perfectionist who not only meticulously researched and wrote the stories, but also laid out thumbnail breakdowns for his own stable of artists. A companion book called *Frontline Combat* was added a year later, also featuring Kurtzman's obsessive (and some would say maddening) attention to detail.

According to Gaines, "Harvey would break the story down into panels and pencil in the lettering, using hand-lettering so a hand-letterer would just letter right over it. Harvey roughed in the pencils for every panel, so he would show them to the artists and probably the artist would have to bring them back and show him the pencils, and Harvey would go over the pencils panel by panel with the guy. George Evans hated it, because he didn't like to work that way. Some of them didn't mind, but George Evans was used to the free hand he had in the stuff he got from Al and I. He couldn't stand the meticulous crap he had to take from Kurtzman, but that's what you had to do to work with Harvey."

The horror books were earning the lion's share of profits, but the science fiction titles were showcasing superb genre work. Gaines and Feldstein had put together another amazing collection of artists like Wally Wood, Joe Orlando and Al Williamson, who would often turn to his artist cronies such as Frank Frazetta, Roy Krenkel and Angelo Torres (nicknamed 'the Fleagle Gang' by Kurtzman) to help him finish his assignments.

The science fiction books were of such a high standard quality-wise that when 451 author Ray

Bradbury discovered that two of his stories had been borrowed without credit (see boxout), he sent a friendly letter not only requesting payment, but also suggesting a number of his other stories that could be adapted.

"That was when I think my writing really started to improve," claims Feldstein in his biography, "because I was immersed in his writing – much to the detriment of the artists. The old joke was that I got to writing such heavy captions and balloons that all the characters had to be drawn with a hunchback."

In 1952, Gaines added a ninth book to the line, *Shock Suspense Stories*, which meant Feldstein was now editing seven books to Kurtzman's two. It also meant he was pulling in the lion's share of editorial money, a fact that began to gnaw at Kurtzman. "In those days, in the case of an editor, I would pay so much per book," remembers Gaines, "and since Harvey was turning out two books to Al's seven, so Harvey was making two sevenths of what Al made."

"This made Harvey very unhappy, so I said, 'I don't know what I can do about it; you're just so bloody slow, but I do have a suggestion.' I knew he was a humourist, because when he first came to our attention with his *Hey Look!* cartoons, we literally rolled on the floor looking at his stuff, so I said, 'You can knock out a humour book very quickly. There's no research, none of the nonsense that you put into *Two-Fisted Tales*; just slip this book in between the other two books, so you'll do three books instead of two and your income will go up 50 per cent!'

"Of course, Harvey being Harvey, he immediately got so engrossed in it that he had to drop one of the other books just to get *Mad* out, so he was right back where he started. That's why there was a *Mad*, which was to help Harvey's income to go up, but it didn't work out that way."

The EC horror books were still selling well, but that success was to be short-lived. The early Fifties was a period of growing paranoia and repression in the US. Senator Joseph McCarthy was whipping the country ➤

THE EC BULLPEN

Gaines offers his comments on a few of his popular creative people...

© Michael Neizer



Al Feldstein

"An extremely capable person, but what you have to understand about Al is that he never had his heart in his work. If I had been in the door knocker business and Al had been running the business for me, I'd have the best goddamned doorknobs ever made. Whatever he

did, he would do well, but when he left *Mad*, he left it and never looked back. He had no nostalgia for it, which shocked and amazed me. Then I heard he sold his bound copies and everything else. He really left and never looked back."

Graham Ingels

"A dear, sweet, quiet and gentle person, although you would never know it from his artwork. He was an alcoholic, so I would give him a job and Graham would normally take two weeks on it. If he came in later than two weeks, I knew he was on a bender somewhere. He would go out and get drunk so that he didn't even know where he was for a week or so, but he never lost the artwork. He never let go of that artwork, and never brought it back dirty or muddy. He always finished it eventually and brought it in, although sometimes late."

"The first time I sent him money [from the EC reprints], he called me up and said, 'I don't want this!' I said, 'Graham, don't fuck up my books. Take the money, and if you don't want it give it to charity, but take it.' Over the years he decided to keep it, and every once in a while he'd say, 'Thanks for that chunk of money, because I had an operation I had to have,' so he came around. He was still not proud of what he did, which is sad, because people adore this man and worship his art."

Jack Davis

"A sweet and wonderful guy. He never went to school, but talent drips from his fingers, and fast! We used to kid him about that, but if you needed a job in three days he would get it out. He still can, but the only problem is that he's got 300 other jobs. He does a lot of advertising work and magazine covers, and he's always loaded down with work. He moved next to a golf course in Atlanta so that he could play golf all day. He just never grew up."

Wally Wood

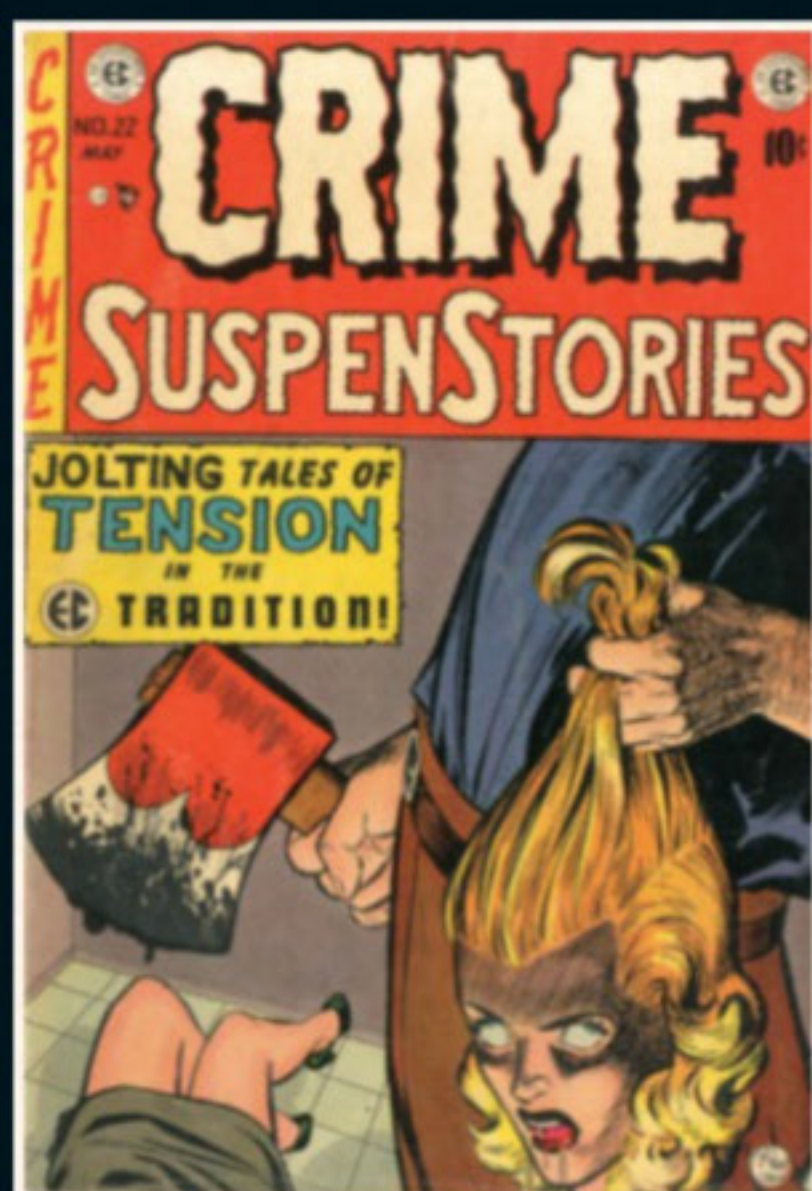
"A mischievous pixie, a delight, but a very unhappy man. As you probably know, he did away with himself [Wood committed suicide in 1981, aged 54]. He was extremely talented; probably EC's number one science fiction artist, and maybe the world's. The saddest thing that happened to Wally was he broke up with his first wife, who he needed. That was his undoing, because he needed somebody strong to help him and give him direction."

Not as fondly recalled as the TV show, the *Tales From The Crypt* film featured a poignant turn from Peter Cushing.



EC'S MOST SHOCKING

The 10 best covers in the EC Comics library



CRIME SUSPENSE STORIES #22

Artist: **Johnny Craig**

One of the most controversial comic covers of all time; it was submitted in evidence during the Senate Subcommittee Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency, having already been changed so the head wasn't dripping blood.



WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY #29

Artist: **Frank Frazetta**

Early Frank Frazetta-era EC work is probably more scarce than hen's teeth nowadays, which makes this chaotic cover for *Weird Science-Fantasy* all the more memorable.



MAD #1

Artist: **Harvey Kurtzman**

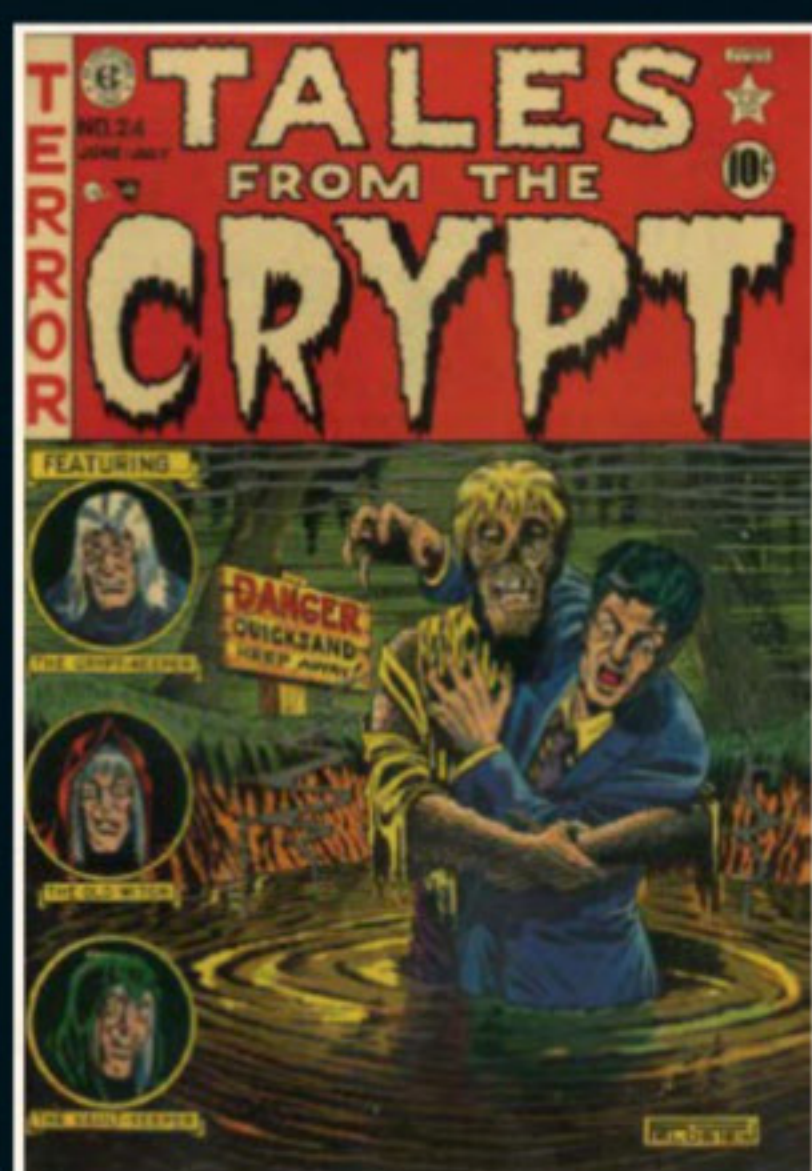
The little humour magazine that started it all. *Mad* magazine would go on to become a national and cultural icon, being parodied in shows like *The Simpsons* and even spawning its own television channel and videogame.



THE HAUNT OF FEAR #13

Artist: **Graham Ingels**

With his proven talent for producing frighteningly evocative covers, his 'Ghostly' nickname is well-deserved; Graham Ingels was one of the greatest horror artists of his time.



TALES FROM THE CRYPT #24

Artist: **Al Feldstein**

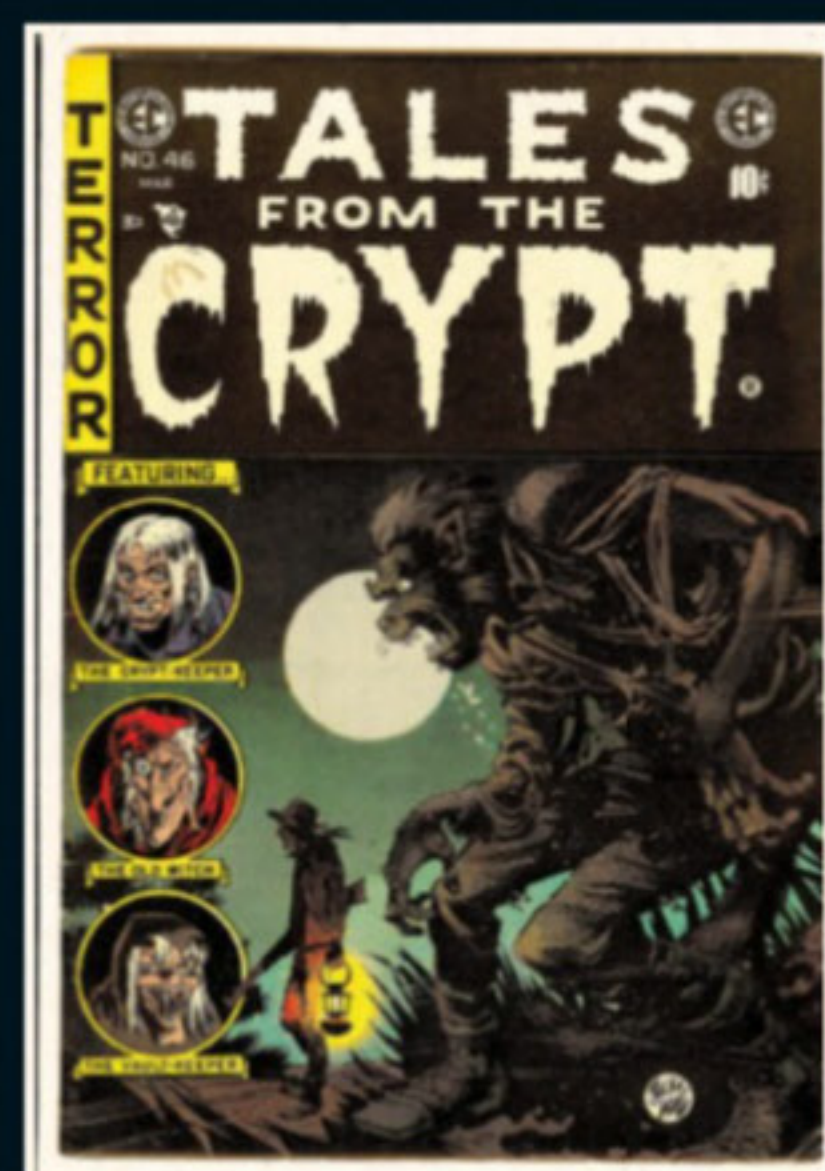
Zombies and quicksand; two primal terrors in a single image. Somewhat fittingly, this issue was named 'The Living Death', and featured a story from the original harbinger of doom, Edgar Allan Poe.



TWO-FISTED TALES #30

Artist: **Jack Davis**

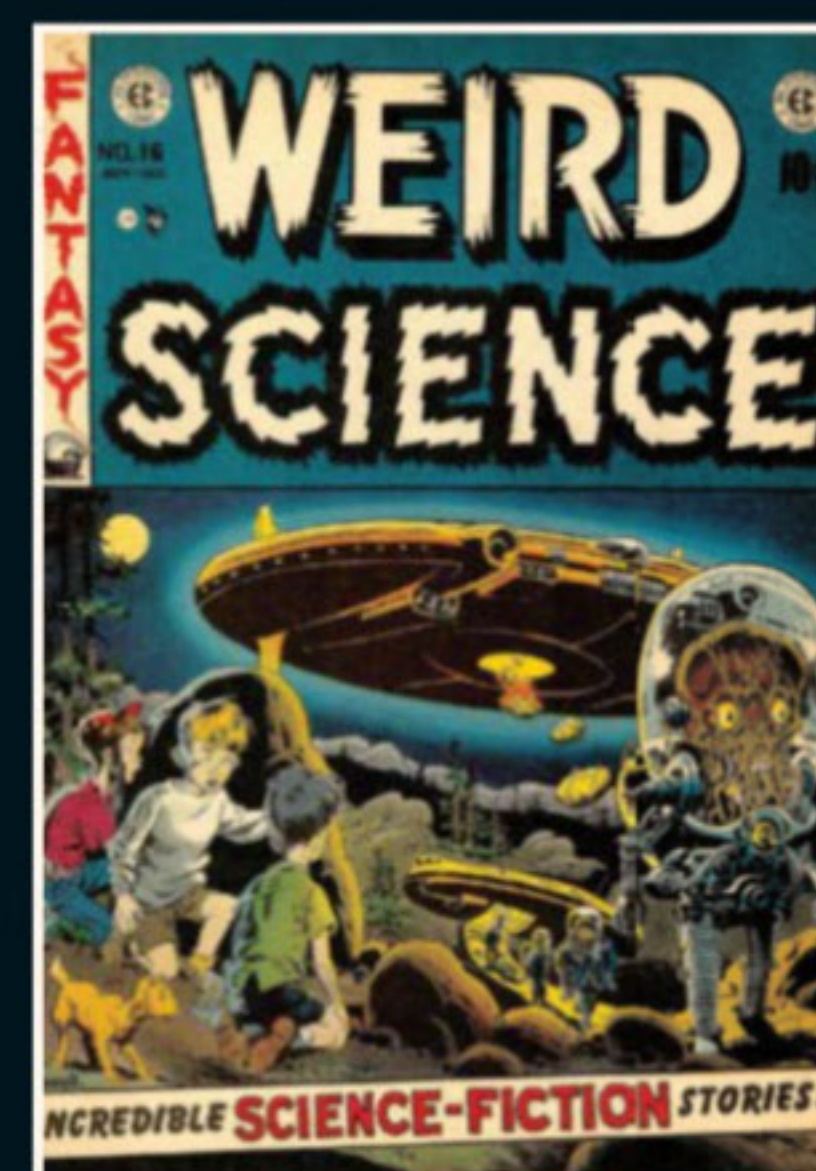
Harvey Kurtzman's stable of artists consistently came up with unforgettable war images. This cover, drawn by Jack Davis, may well be the best in a series with no shortage of great images.



TALES FROM THE CRYPT #46

Artist: **Jack Davis**

Not only an amazing cover, in which a murderous werewolf who earns the ire of the local townsfolk due to his actions is depicted, but one of the best covers in the series, full stop.

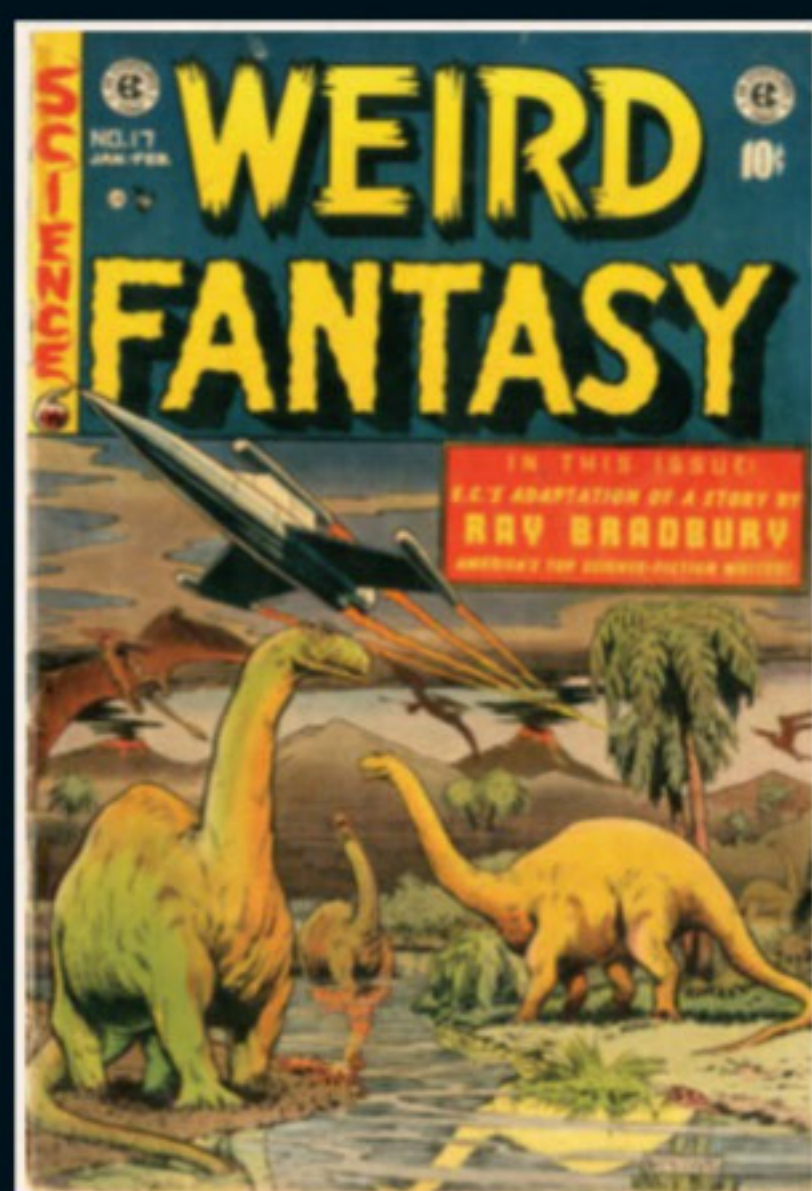


WEIRD SCIENCE #16

Artist: **Wally Wood**

A cover that yet again proved that the use of two vastly contrasting motifs can make for a truly unforgettable image. An alien invasion and a puppy – what more could you want?

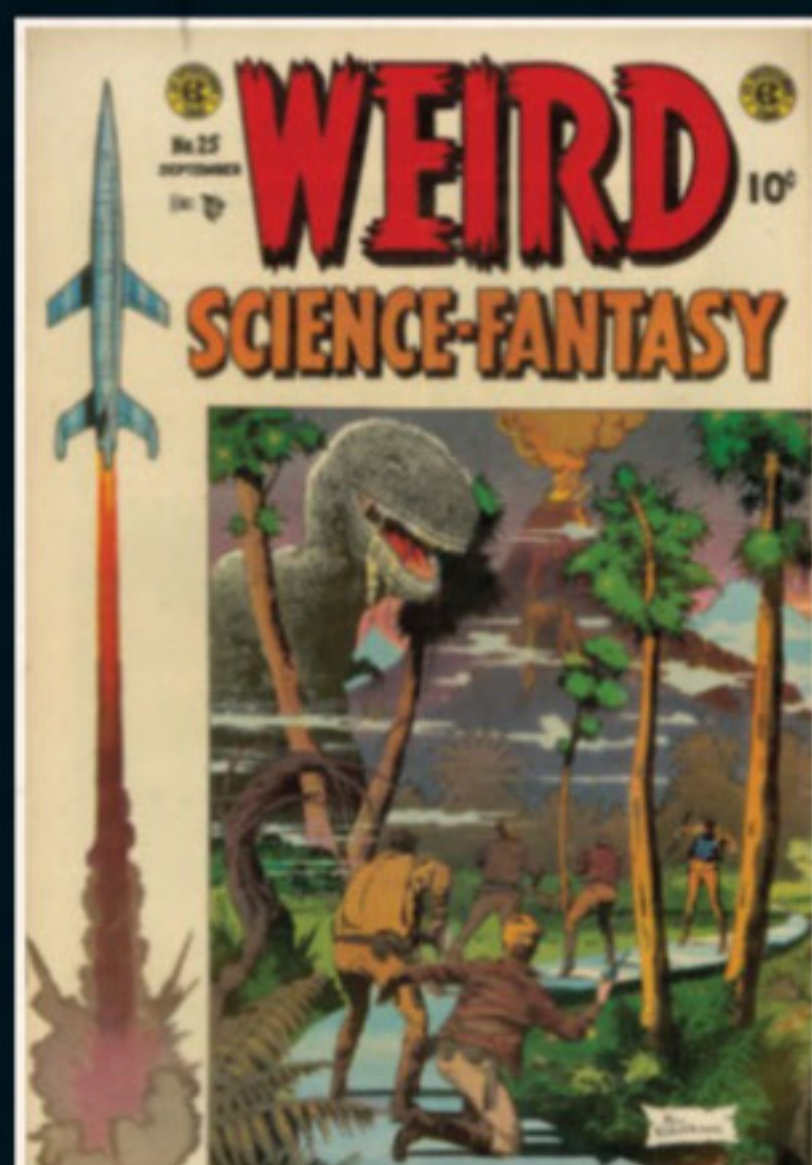
COVERS



WEIRD FANTASY #17

Artist: **Al Feldstein**

An issue in which *Weird Fantasy* undoubtedly lived up to its name, featuring rocket ships and dinosaurs: a bizarre yet amazing combination, even six decades later.



WEIRD SCIENCE FANTASY #25

Artist: **Al Williamson**

Having responded to the unauthorised publication of his stories with an offer of more work, Ray Bradbury popped up more and more, with 'A Sound Of Thunder' coming to life courtesy of Al Williamson.



The EC legacy lived on in films like *Tales From The Crypt* and *The Vault Of Horror*.

into a frenzy with red-baiting rhetoric, and Hollywood was blacklisting anybody who exhibited the slightest whiff of communism. And a psychiatrist named Fredric Wertham, who had asserted a connection between comic-books and juvenile delinquency in his book, *Seduction Of The Innocent*. "These things weren't connected," claims Gaines, "but they were all around the same time.

"The first problem was the blacklisting by the un-American Activities Committee, which was designed mostly for Hollywood. They nailed all those poor bastards, who had to confess what they did, which was nothing all that bad, but they also had to say which friends did it, which was terrible stuff. Some of them refused and got in trouble, just as if they had been doing something wrong in the first place.

"The second thing was the McCarthy hearings. This bastard, completely separate from Hollywood, was making a name for itself, but his big boo-boo was to accuse the State Department of having all these communists, so he was eventually knocked out of the box by that, because he was way out of line, and that eventually ruined him.

"The hearings I was involved in were the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency. They were attempting to demonstrate that comics caused juvenile delinquency, so there were three different things going on at the time."

The firestorm against the comic-book industry and EC in particular had been building for some time. Several newspapers had been running anti-comic articles, notably the *Hartford Courant*, which published a four-part series that noted 'Ten cents at your local neighbourhood drug store or newsstand will buy your child a short course in murder, mayhem, robbery, rape, cannibalism, carnage, sex and worse.'

Oddly enough, it wasn't a horror comic that caused the most public outrage, but *Mad's* sister book *Panic*, which featured a parody of *The Night Before Christmas* in which Santa's sled sported a 'Just Divorced' sign, as well as trailing a trashcan lid, an axe and a series of knives behind it.

According to Will Elder, who illustrated the now-infamous story, "I wasn't knocking Christmas per se; I was knocking things that were ridiculous, like 'There

wasn't a mouse stirring in the house.' He comes down the chimney, but how could he do that unless he's a chimney sweep? And I remembered *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus*, which was an old song, so I decided to throw that in there too."

No one, the artist included, ever imagined the story would create such a – pun intended – panic. "I think everything is based on the climate and morality of the times," Elder reflects. "They said juvenile delinquency was instigated by the kind of materials these kids picked up and read, but I think if they were going to be juveniles, they were going to be juveniles without reading a single book. Those with better intentions would never be influenced by that."

Events came to a head in a series of hearings by the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency held in April of 1954. Gaines, at the urging of his business manager Lyle Stuart, agreed to appear as a voluntary witness (Feldstein was asked to testify at a private session the previous day and wasn't recalled for the public hearing). Following Wertham, who appeared first, Gaines began his own testimony by reading from a prepared statement written the night before. "Lyle had wisely suggested I ask to be invited to testify," he recalls, "which they did. Of course, they would have pulled me in to testify whether I offered to or not, but I went in a little more bravely than I might have if they had just dragged me in by the hair, which they did to all the other publishers. I was the one who was the big monkey."

Unfortunately, things didn't necessarily go to plan. Although Gaines' defence of comics on First



Though departing from the style, 1972's *Tales From The Crypt* stayed true to the anthology format.



THE BRADBURY TALES

The SF heavyweight's surprisingly good-natured response to being ripped off



When bestselling author Ray Bradbury discovered that EC had used a pair of his stories without attribution or payment, he sent a letter to the company on 19 April 1952, reading:

'Just a note to remind you of an oversight. You have not as yet sent on the check of \$50 to

cover the use of secondary rights on my two stories THE ROCKET MAN and KALEIDOSCOPE which appeared in your WEIRD-FANTASY May-June '52 #13 with the cover-all title of HOME TO STAY. I feel this was probably overlooked in the general confusion of office-work, and I look forward to your payment in the near future.'

To show there were no hard feelings, Bradbury added, 'Have you ever considered doing an entire issue of your magazine based on my stories in DARK CARNIVAL, or my other two books, THE ILLUSTRATED MAN and THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES? I'd be very interested in discussing this with you for some future issue. I think we could do an outstanding job here...'

"THEY SAID JUVENILE DELINQUENCY WAS INSTIGATED BY COMICS, BUT I THINK IF THEY WERE GOING TO BE DELINQUENTS, THEY WERE GOING TO BE DELINQUENTS WITHOUT READING A SINGLE BOOK" WILL ELDER

➤ Amendment and aesthetic grounds was well-presented, the questioning went downhill fast. "They were asking things like how much money I made a year, and I said, 'About \$40,000 a year,' as though I should feel guilty for making a profit at a capitalistic endeavour. I don't know what they had in mind, but they were attacking me from all directions.

"The one thing that put a tag on the whole thing was when somebody held up a cover that Johnny Craig had done, where he had drawn this severed head, and [Senator Kefauver] asked if it was in good taste. I said, 'I think it's in good taste for a horror magazine,' and he asked, 'How would it have been in bad taste?' It was a stupid question, but I happened to have the answer, because when the cover originally came in, there was blood dripping from the head and I had Johnny Craig raise the bottom of the page so it covered the neck from which the blood was dripping.

"I told them that and said that would have been in bad taste I supposed, so that was very funny and everybody was quoting me that it would have been in bad taste if blood had been dripping from the neck. You get into silly areas. When did you stop beating your wife? It's difficult to answer those questions."

As a result of his testimony, Gaines found himself the target of misguided outrage against the comic-book industry. Bundles of comics were being returned unopened by distributors. In an attempt to turn things around the major publishers formed the Comics Magazine Association of America, but their solution to rehabilitate their image was the institution of the Comics Code in 1954.

Gaines dropped his crime and horror comics and created a new line of 'clean' comics, including *Impact*, *Valor*, *Aces High*, *Psychoanalysis*, *Extra!* and *MD*, but the damage was done and the books sold poorly. A



A heavily made-up Peter Cushing in the *Tales From The Crypt* movie.

series of 'Picto-Fiction' magazines followed, and were met with an equal lack of interest. Only *Mad* continued to sell well.

As it turned out, *Mad*'s future as a comic-book was short-lived as well. When Kurtzman expressed a desire to move on, Gaines offered to turn *Mad* into a 'slick' magazine. Sales continued to grow, and bolstered by the magazine's success Kurtzman pushed for a controlling interest in his brainchild. Gaines refused and Kurtzman walked. "I went back and got Al Feldstein," continues Gaines, "who by this time was out of work, because I had dropped every other magazine. I said, 'Come with me, I think we can get rich together on this one!' and by the time he retired he was the highest-paid editor in the world as far as I know. He got a really nice salary; when he retired at the age of 60 he became a ski bum."

Although EC Comics may have not have earned the long-term success they deserved at the time, history has vindicated the work of Gaines and his team. The horror books enjoyed a resurgence in popularity largely due to the much loved 1989-96 *Tales From The Crypt* TV series, but Dark Horse has also announced plans to start reprinting the original EC library, beginning in October. According to Dark Horse editor Daniel Chabon, "The plan is to reprint everything picking up from where Russ Cochran left off. We'll be publishing the collections quarterly, starting with *Tales From The Crypt* Volume Four, *Vault Of Horror* Volume Three, *Weird Fantasy* Volume One and more."

For Gaines (who died in 1992), this continued popularity would probably come as no surprise. "It was a wonderful place to work," he reflects in that 1990 conversation, "and a great crew, every damn one of them. For what they did, they were all fantastic. With the horror stories, Craig, Davis and Ingels; their work was unparalleled, and on the science fiction books we had artists like Joe Orlando and Wally Wood.

"It was like a little family. All the artists loved each other's work, so if an artist brought in a job and there were two or three other artists, they would go wild over the job. There was no jealousy. They were all different, and they all loved each other's work, so there was a great mutual appreciation. Everybody worked more than they needed to for the work they were getting."

As for the ongoing appeal of those classic EC Comics tales, his answer then remains relevant now, "I'd like to think it's because they're good stories," declares Gaines. "Back in the Fifties, only kids read them and the adults yelled their heads off at the poor kids for reading them. Now, everybody is enjoying them, the adults more than the kids, so I feel completely vindicated and very delighted."



Feldstein: The Mad Life And Fantastic Art Of Al Feldstein! is available from IDW, while the latest Dark Horse reprint, *The EC Archives: Tales From The Crypt* Volume Four, is out 12 November. Both books are priced at £37.99.

"GOODBYE HARVEY"

How *Mad* co-creator Harvey Kurtzman regained his senses



There have been a number of accounts over the years of how Harvey Kurtzman came to leave *Mad*, the magazine he helped create. Gaines insists his version is 100 per cent correct. "I remember precisely what happened," he relates, "and what happened is that Harvey was given a very lucrative

offer by either *Pageant* or *Coronet*, one of those small magazines of the day, which were very popular and had a high circulation.

"The editor recognised Harvey's talent and made him an offer that he would give him either 24 or 32 pages of the magazine that would be his every month, and he could do anything he wanted. It was a fine offer, and I couldn't counter it with money, because I didn't have much money at that point. Sales had been bad, so the only way I could get Harvey to stay was to offer him the opportunity of turning *Mad* from a ten-cent comic into a slick magazine.

"Harvey had approached me with the idea prior to that, and I said, 'Not a chance, I'm a comic publisher; I don't know anything about magazines. I'm doing fine in comics; why should I get into this area?' but I now reversed myself. I figured this might bring him back and it did. Harvey was so enthralled with the idea that he stayed with *Mad* and turned it into a magazine.

"Meanwhile, he apparently got a very lucrative offer from Hugh Hefner and *Playboy*, which ultimately resulted in *Little Annie Fanny*. I didn't know that, but Harvey came to me and said, 'I'm going to leave *Mad* unless I get control of it!' Up to now he had been an employee, and I said, 'What do you mean, control 51 per cent of the stock?' and he said yes.

"I said, 'Come on Harvey, you want me to give you half of the magazine?' and he said, 'That's the only basis under which I'll stay!' I said, 'Goodbye Harvey!' He said, 'You'd better think about it,' and I said, 'I thought about it; goodbye, Harvey!' That is precisely the whole story of how *Mad* started and how it ended with Harvey."

THE RULES

The occasionally adhered to founding guidelines of EC Comics

When William Gaines took over the family business from his late father Max in 1947, he was introduced to a set of taboo subjects that had been set down by editor Sheldon Mayer:

- 1 Never show anybody being stabbed or shot.
- 2 Show no torture scenes.
- 3 Never show a hypodermic needle.
- 4 Don't chop the limbs off anybody.
- 5 Never show a coffin, especially with anybody in it.

Less than half a decade after taking over EC Comics, the younger Gaines would have broken every rule on that list.

BUILDING THE TERMINATOR

Unseen photos and documents from James Cameron's masterpiece WORDS JAMES HOARE

Released in 1984, James Cameron's dark and stylish *The Terminator* was as much a visitor from cinema's future – giving way to 1991's *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* and the spectacular rebirth of the blockbuster – as its bionic villain. Feast your optics on these incredible stills, script pages and behind-the-scenes pictures from the new *Terminator Vault*...

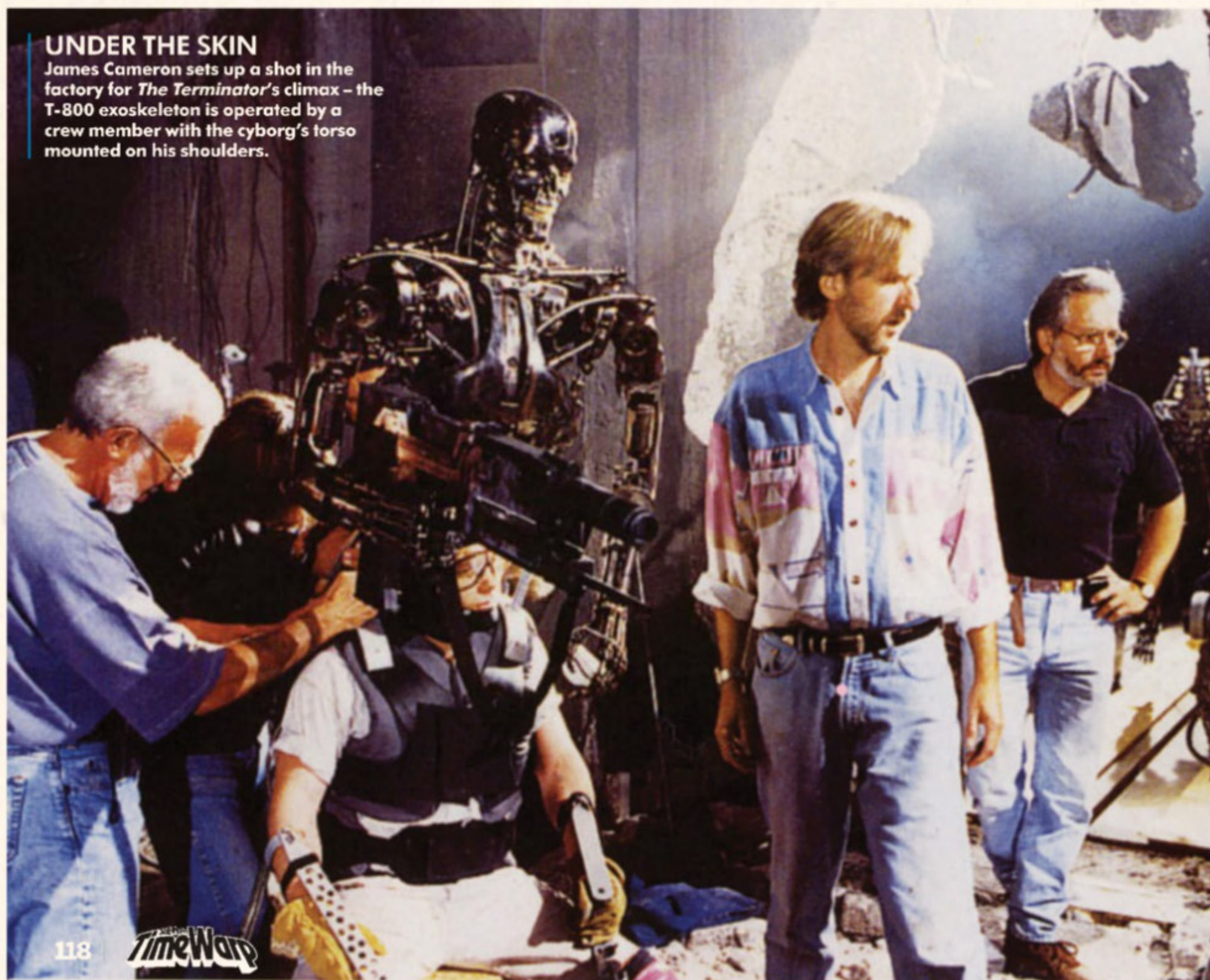


HANDS-ON DIRECTION

Cameron inspects the T-1000's liquid metal stab wound on Linda Hamilton in preparation for the smelting plant climax of *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*.

UNDER THE SKIN

James Cameron sets up a shot in the factory for *The Terminator*'s climax – the T-800 exoskeleton is operated by a crew member with the cyborg's torso mounted on his shoulders.



RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINES

Sarah Connor (Hamilton)'s transformation between the two films from everywoman pushed to the brink to full-blown survivalist placed her in Cameron's pantheon alongside *Alien*'s Ellen Ripley.

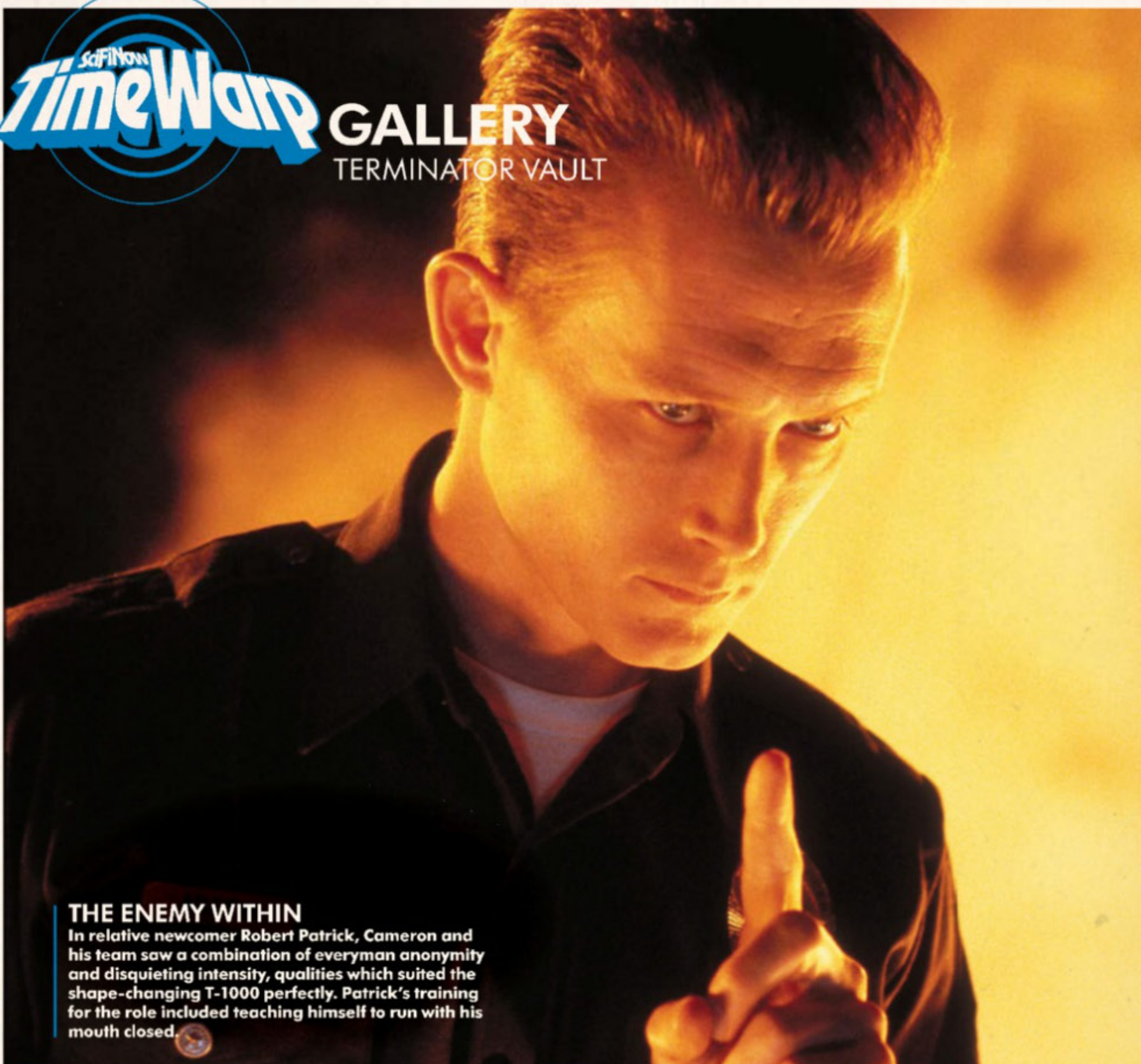




LIQUID MAGIC

ILM lived up to their reputation on *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, with the liquid effect of Robert Patrick's T-1000 being a landmark achievement. The special effects for Patrick's liquid metal form, which was on screen for just over three minutes, cost \$5.5 million – nearly the budget of the first movie.





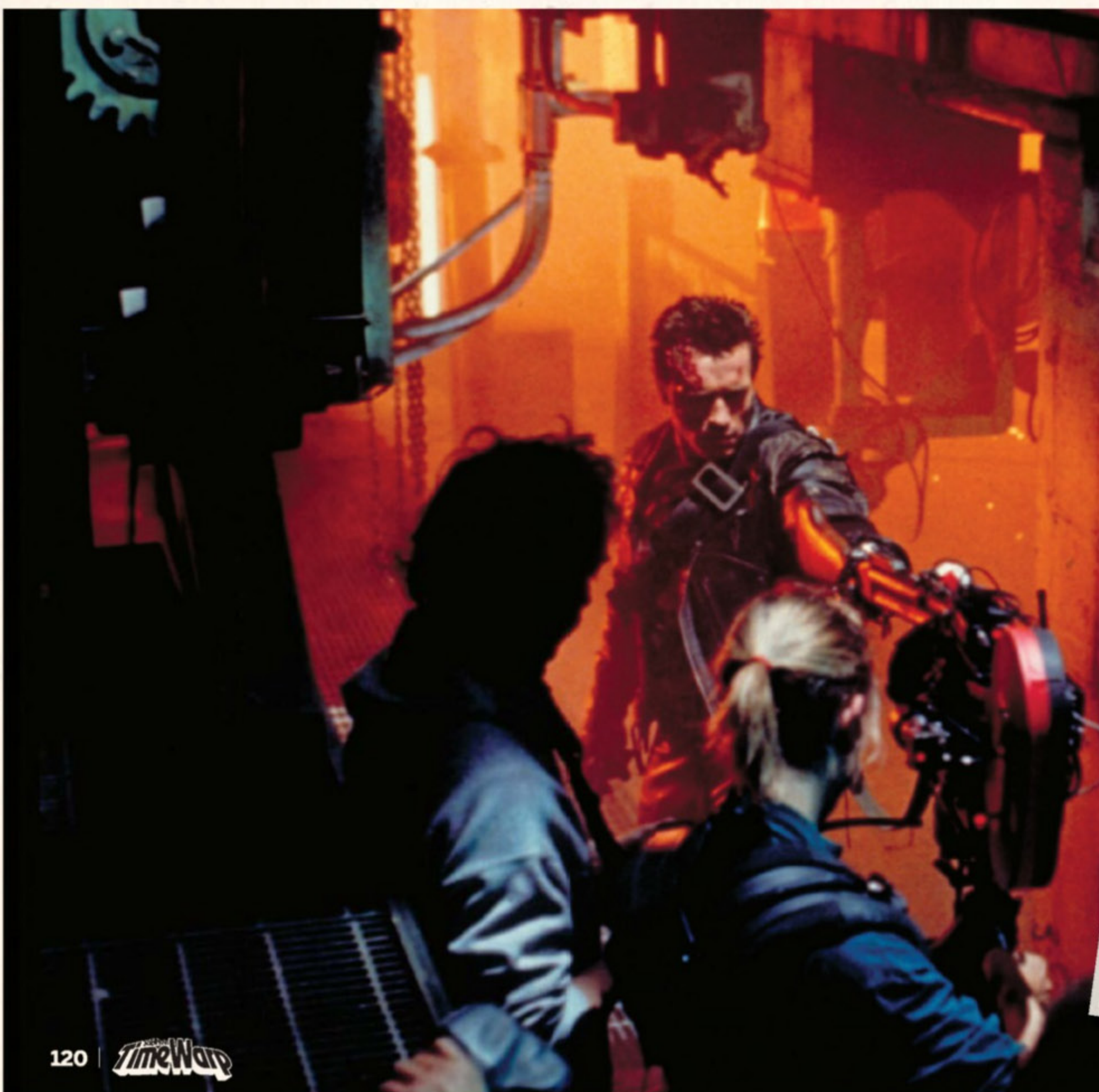
THE ENEMY WITHIN

In relative newcomer Robert Patrick, Cameron and his team saw a combination of everyman anonymity and disquieting intensity, qualities which suited the shape-changing T-1000 perfectly. Patrick's training for the role included teaching himself to run with his mouth closed.



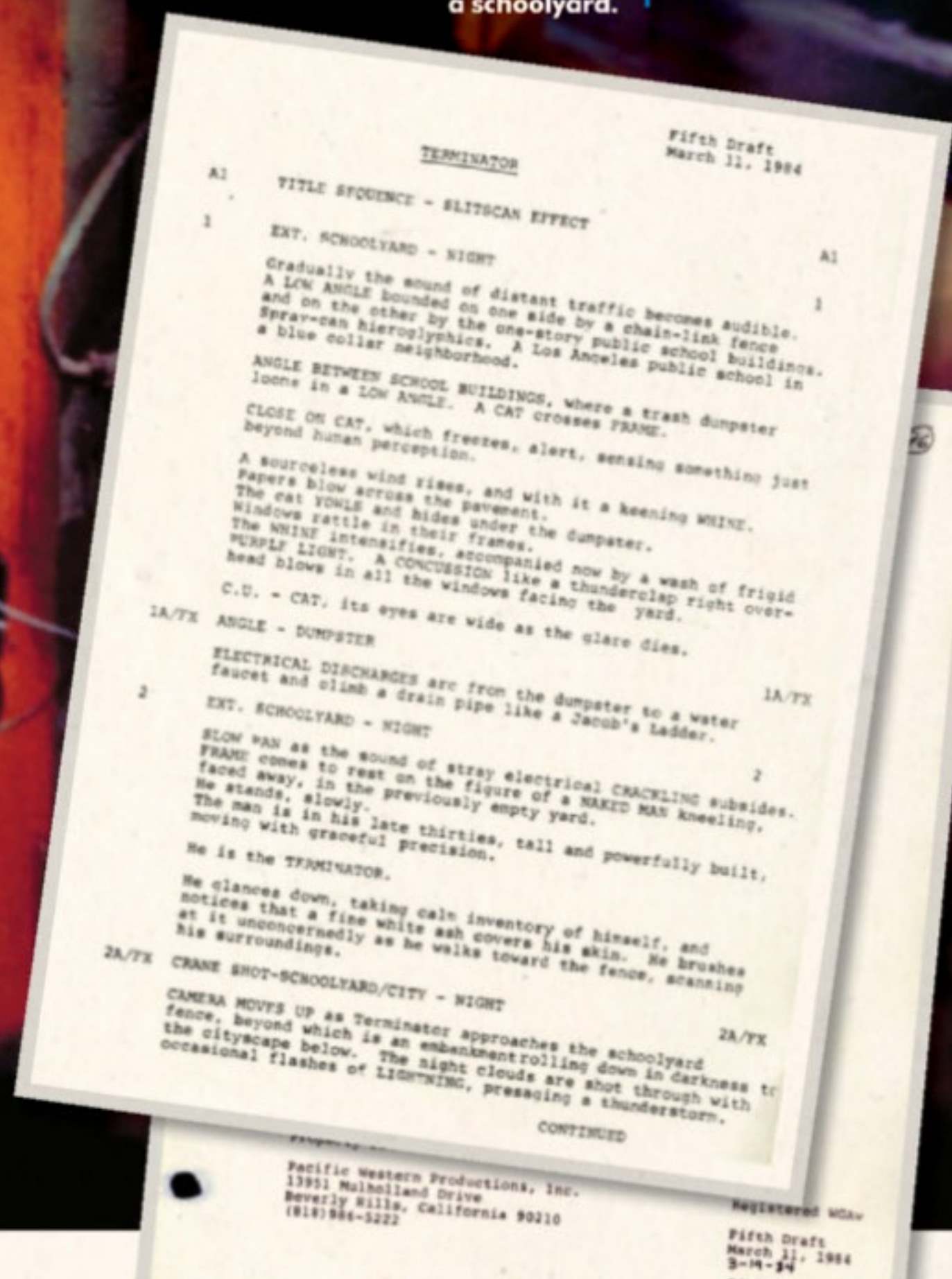
"ROMANTIC NIGHTMARE"

When casting Linda Hamilton and Michael Biehn as Sarah Connor and Kyle Reese, Cameron was mindful of how they would interact on screen – referring to *The Terminator* as "a romantic nightmare" as much as a futuristic thriller.



THE BEGINNING

The first pages of the fifth draft of the *The Terminator*, dated 11 March 1984. Unlike the script that was eventually filmed, this version of the story starts off in a schoolyard.



TERMINATOR VAULT GALLERY



HE'S NOT THE MESSIAH, HE'S A VERY NAUGHTY BOY

Edward Furlong was an unknown before Cameron cast him as the delinquent John Connor. The director would have Furlong do jumping jacks between takes to keep his energy up.



TERMINATOR VAULT

The definitive story behind the making of two all-time classics

Filled with never-before-published photos, scripts, concept art and blueprints, *Terminator Vault: The Complete Story Behind The Making Of The Terminator & Terminator 2: Judgement Day* by film journalist Ian Nathan, takes you behind the scenes on the piston-powered double punch with which director James Cameron and star Arnold Schwarzenegger redefined the sci-fi blockbuster.

Available to buy now in gorgeous hardcover slipcase from Aurum Press priced at £30, *Terminator Vault* is a must-own for any sci-fi fan.

WITH SAM RAIMI ESTABLISHED AS ONE OF THE PIVOTAL FIGURES BEHIND THE COMIC-BOOK MOVIE REVOLUTION, WE TURN THE CLOCK BACK TO 1990 TO LOOK AT HIS FIRST ATTEMPT. GRAB YOUR SYNTHETIC SKIN AND PINK ELEPHANT AND REMEMBER LIAM NEESON'S MONSTROUS ANTI-HERO, DARKMAN...

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL



DARKMAN



Film

RUNNING TIME:

96 mins

RELEASE DATE:

24 August 1990

DIRECTOR:

Sam Raimi

WRITERS: Chuck Pfarrer,

Sam Raimi, Ivan Raimi,

Daniel Goldin, Joshua Goldin

CAST: Liam Neeson, Frances

McDormand, Colin Friels,

Larry Drake

About

Scientist Peyton Westlake (Liam Neeson) is working on a synthetic skin, but can't get it to remain stable past 99 minutes. When a gang of crooks led by Robert Durant (Larry Drake) break into his lab looking for a memo left there by his girlfriend Julie (Frances McDormand), they blow the place up and leave Peyton for dead. He survives, but is horribly disfigured. Unable to feel pain, he becomes prone to bouts of rage and sudden surges of strength and adrenaline. Recreating his lab in an abandoned factory, Peyton sets out to bring Durant down... if his skin lasts long enough.

It's difficult to remember a time before each summer brought a cavalcade of comic-book movies. While many acknowledge Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man* as the reason for that recent explosion, many forget that the director had dabbled in the superhero genre more than ten years previously with *Darkman*.

The film's origins stem from the *Evil Dead* maestro's interest in *The Shadow*. Created as an announcer who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men for radio show *The Detective Story Hour*, *The Shadow* was a mysterious man about town/vigilante who spun off into novels, comic-books, TV and eventually his own film. When Raimi was unable to secure the rights to the character, he created his own: Dr Peyton Westlake, aka Darkman.

Darkman arrived at an interesting point in Raimi's career. Having made his name with *The Evil Dead* in 1981, he turned away from the horror genre with *Crimewave*. The wacky comedy, co-written with the Coen brothers, was a huge flop, and nearly ruined the boy from Michigan before he'd even got started. He got back on track with *Evil Dead 2* and found himself with clout and a budget. At the age of 30, Raimi made his first superhero movie.

The character may have his roots in *The Shadow*, with a nearly identical costume and craving for justice, but *Darkman's* roots date from five years previously to Lon Chaney and *The Phantom Of The Opera*. Over the course of the script's many drafts, Dr Peyton Westlake (Liam Neeson) became less of a dashing vigilante (although the hat and cloak remained) and more of a monstrous avenger.

It's easy to see *Darkman* as the product of a lab experiment gone haywire, as

Raimi threw myriad ingredients together to create something that is identifiably his. There's the influence of classic Universal monster movies (although those Technicolor chemicals are pure Hammer). The revenge scheme and villains are decidedly comic-book-esque, while the tragic romance between Peyton and Julie (Frances McDormand) has some wonderful Thirties movie notes (the dissolve from her outside the burning lab to standing at Peyton's grave is fantastic). Perhaps most surprising is that the rival gangs' confrontation at the start of the film feels like something out of *Bugsy Malone*, coming perilously close to breaking out into an elaborate dance number.

"DARKMAN IS DECIDEDLY DARKER THAN ANY STRAIGHT ADAPTATION OF THE SHADOW WOULD HAVE BEEN"

But for all the pulpy face-swapping fun ("Shoot him!" "No, shoot him!") it's the monster movie component that provides *Darkman* with its greatest strength. The disfigured Peyton is left to howl and rage at his equipment and one extremely grumpy cat. His attempts to rekindle his relationship with Julie are not just awkward; they're tragic. With the exception of the Hulk, it's hard to think of another hero so cursed by his powers. That link to the green goliath and his werewolf progenitors is as important as the Phantom.

Just look at the fairground scene. Everything is clearly going too well as a temporarily re-skinned Peyton and Julie reconnect. The display of a freak puts him on edge as the crowds cackle away, but it's the shot put that tips him over the edge.

When the carny refuses to hand over the pink elephant that Peyton won fair and square, Raimi turns his rage into a firework display. Having broken the man's fingers, Peyton thrusts the stuffed animal at Julie. "Take the fucking elephant!" he growls.

Speaking of werewolves, who better than Jenny Agutter, surely an expert in lycanthropy following *An American Werewolf In London*, to present the wounded Peyton to an amused medical team. Bandaged from head to toe and spinning on a board like a knife-thrower's target, Peyton is no longer something to be treated as a person; he has become a monster (as the presence of John Landis confirms). As Peyton breaks out of his

restraints, it's difficult not to think of Alfred Molina's Doctor Octopus in Raimi's *Spider-Man 2*, although Peyton keeps his body count restricted to criminals.

Still, his determination to eradicate those scumbags has a Punisher-like intensity to it. "I told you everything!" pleads Ted Raimi's hapless goon Rick. "I know you did," Darkman replies. "But let's pretend you didn't!" With a murderous, cussing and monstrous hero, *Darkman* is decidedly darker than any straight adaptation of *The Shadow* would have been. Raimi has always enjoyed putting his characters through hell, but there haven't been many superhero movies with such a strong emphasis on their hero's dark side. The closest anyone else has come is probably the awful 1997 *Spawn* film or



Liam Neeson's performance is highly hammy, but entirely in keeping with the tone of the film.



When his attempts to adapt *The Shadow* failed, Sam Raimi instead created his own dark hero.

DARKMAN

RETRO CLASSIC

CLASSIC QUOTES

"YOU TRULY ARE ONE UGLY SON OF A BITCH!"

LOUIS STRACK JR

"IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ME... I HAVE THINGS TO DO"

JULIE HASTINGS

"TELL US WHERE TO FIND THE BELLASARIOUS MEMORANDUM, AND WE SHALL DISAPPEAR... LIKE A NIGHTMARE BEFORE THE BREAKING DAY"

ROBERT DURANT

"I'M EVERYONE – AND NO ONE. EVERYWHERE – NOWHERE. CALL ME... DARKMAN"

DARKMAN

"JULIE... DON'T YOU THINK I TOLD MYSELF THAT? NIGHT AFTER SKINLESS NIGHT!"

PEYTON WESTLAKE

"CAUSE HE'S AN ASSHOLE! TELL HIM NO. TELL HIM NO, TOO. HIM, TELL 'FUCK YOU'"

EDDIE BLACK

'CRIME HAS A NEW ENEMY AND JUSTICE HAS A NEW FACE'

TAGLINE

"WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE DARK? WHAT SECRET DOES IT HOLD?"

PEYTON WESTLAKE



Darkman is the true precursor to the on-screen superheroics of today.



➤ Lexi Alexander's curiously misunderstood *Punisher: War Zone*.

Neeson's performance is impeccable. He's more than capable of conveying Peyton's emotional trauma while utterly unafraid to go big. When Peyton puts a cone on his head and dances around his workshop singing "See the dancing freak!" scaring the crap out of the cat (who has inexplicably hung around), it feels like a Bruce Campbell moment, and his appropriate excesses also recall Willem Dafoe's turn in *Spider-Man*.

But it's *Spider-Man 2*'s Doc Ock that is the most clearly influenced by *Darkman*: a warm and caring scientist who has everything taken away from him, suddenly given access to unknown strength and anger. While Molina's performance as Otto Octavius is just as important to the character's success, not to mention the existing comic-book



"IT WOULD BE YEARS BEFORE MEN IN MASKS EXPLORED THEIR GREY AREAS WITH A SIMILAR LEVEL OF ENTHUSIASM"

character, it's important to note the influence of Peyton.

Raimi has spoken about the compromises he was forced to make, with five screenwriters delivering 12 different drafts. Similarly, the editing process proved difficult, as test audiences disliked several scenes, including one with white-collar villain Louis Strack Jr (Colin Fries) diving naked into a pile of money. While that particular moment might not have fixed the fact that he's a largely redundant second villain, *Darkman* bears the scars of many cuts. The second half doesn't pay off

on the first's promise; it's essentially two long action sequences. It's still great fun, but some of the dramatic edge is lost.

Even taking interference into consideration, *Darkman* occupies an uneasy halfway point for Raimi. There's the usual level of beserk visual invention, with POV shots for bolts fired from a gun, laboratory equipment spinning across the screen to indicate the passage of time, and the shot that goes into one of Peyton's eyes and out of the other to show his rage is fantastic. But you can also see the director pushing himself to try new things. His

DARK MEN

The square jaws and pained eyes of Sam Raimi's tortured heroes

ASH WILLIAMS
(EVIL DEAD TRILOGY)



1 Bruce Campbell's loud-mouthed braggard has had to overcome his own cowardice, arrogance, a possessed hand and a doppelganger.

ELLEN
(THE QUICK AND THE DEAD)



2 Sharon Stone's gunslinger comes to the town of Redemption's quick-draw contest with murder in mind after Gene Hackman ruins her life.

HANK
(A SIMPLE PLAN)



3 If Bill Paxton wants to keep that bag of money he found then he will have to make some tough decisions. Lying? That's easy enough. Murder? That will be a bit harder.



The love story between Peyton and Julie (Frances McDormand) is heartbreaking in its inevitable failure.



The story of *Darkman* would continue in two markedly inferior straight-to-DVD sequels.

stylistic experiments have to fit into a more conventional narrative, as McDormand is forced to carry the burden of grounding the film in reality all by herself.

Darkman debuted at number one in the US, but ultimately it was no more than a moderate success. Raimi returned to the *Evil Dead* franchise to make *Army Of Darkness*, and as much as *Darkman* feels like it's being made by a genre director being pushed into making a mainstream film, the third *Evil Dead*'s horror movie moments feel a bit like a token gesture. He wouldn't direct another straightforward horror film until 2009's triumphantly terrifying *Drag Me To Hell*. Raimi's return to the superhero genre would be a more comprehensive success than *Darkman*, but this is a fascinating forerunner. Thanks to composer Danny Elfman, it even sounds a bit like *Spider-Man*. And *Batman*.

As fun as it is, *Darkman* has real problems. Its tonal schizophrenia is a big part of its charm, but the choppy editing and a rushed conclusion means that there isn't a strong enough narrative to anchor it. But while it may be compromised, it's a hugely entertaining film that's fizzing with the usual Raimi wit and invention, and it should by all rights have been the inspiration for a wave of anti-hero superhero movies. Instead, it would be years before men in masks explored their grey areas with a similar level of enthusiasm in *Kick-Ass*, *Super* and the criminally underrated *Defendor*.

Darkman is the hero who drops a villain to his death in full view of the woman he loves. He doesn't leave Julie behind because he's worried she might get hurt; he realises that he is no longer the person she fell in love with. He's become a monster on the inside. He's *Darkman*. 🦋

WATCH FIRST



THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (1925)

Lon Chaney's timeless turn as the Phantom is a huge influence on Liam Neeson's *Darkman*, as is Robert Julian's direction.

WATCH NEXT



THE MASK (1994)

Jim Carrey delivers an early star turn in this surprisingly dark (but not as dark as the comics) comedy about a supernatural Viking mask.

ANNIE WILSON

(THE GIFT)



4 Cate Blanchett's psychic wrongly accuses Keanu Reeves of killing Katie Holmes, ignoring the fact that Greg Kinnear is clearly too good to be true.

CHRISTINE BROWN

(DRAG ME TO HELL)



5 Alison Lohman denies Mrs Ganush a loan in order to show her boss she can be mean, and spends the rest of the film – and her life – regretting it.

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WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"One of my fave SF films... lots of fun, dark, original and so much better than his later bloated movies." **@HokusBloke**



"Best last 30 seconds in any movie of the Nineties. With the possible exception of *The Lawnmower Man*." **@AlasdairStuart**



"Raimi's best since *Evil Dead 2*." **@SoundtrekLITM**



"It had Liam Neeson as a super hero. What's not to love about that?" **@Rhys180**



"Sadly few seem to know about it. Some great scenes and direction." **@ParsonsFiction**



"Definitely overlooked classic. Inspired many hours of shouting 'JUULULIEEE!'" **@autocratik**

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1. Which of Gerry Anderson's shows immediately precedes *Captain Scarlet And The Mysterons*?
2. In what year was *Captain Scarlet* first broadcast?
3. Where do the Mysterons come from?
4. Which Captain orders the destruction of the Mysterion Complex?
5. How do the Mysterons make their presence known?

RAINBOW NATION

6. What is the name of the organisation that Captain Scarlet works for?
7. What nationality is Scarlet's partner, Captain Blue?

8. How many Angel pilots are there?
9. Name their base of operations.
10. Which of these is not a Captain: Ochre, Magenta, Teal or Indigo?

INDESTRUCTIBLE

11. How does Captain Scarlet die for the first time?
12. Which classic movie star was Captain Scarlet's appearance based on?
13. Who transpired to be the first assassination target of the Mysterons?
14. Which figure does Captain Scarlet answer to?
15. In addition to being completely invincible,

what other paranormal abilities does Captain Scarlet possess?

MAN BEHIND THE MARIONETTES

16. What was the name of Gerry Anderson's first supermarionation production?
17. Name Gerry Anderson's second wife and long-term creative partner.
18. Who sung the Fireball XL5 theme song?
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20. How old was Anderson when he passed away?

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6-10

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We're sure you're very capable, but you're not at the top of anyone's list. You might have thrilling side-adventures with Captain Magenta, but frankly we don't know if we care.



0-5

CAPTAIN BLACK
We'd put you at the bottom of this list even if you weren't a puppet; it was your foolish actions that started the war with the Mysterons. You didn't have much of a mind to take over to begin with.

ANSWERS: 1. THUNDERBIRDS 2. 1967 3. MARS 4. CAPTAIN BLACK 5. GREEN RINGS 6. SPECTRUM 7. AMERICAN 8. FIVE: DESTINY, MELODY, HARMONY, RHAPSODY AND SYMPHONY 9. CLODBASE 10. TEAL 11. HE IS SHOT AND FALLS 800 FEET 12. CARY GRANT 13. THE WORLD PRESIDENT 14. COLONEL WHITE 15. HE CAN SENSE THE MYSTERONS' PRESENCE 16. SUPERCAR 17. SYLVIA ANDERSON 18. DON SPENCER. IT WAS LATER COVERED BY THE FLEE-REKKERS 19. 2005 20. 83

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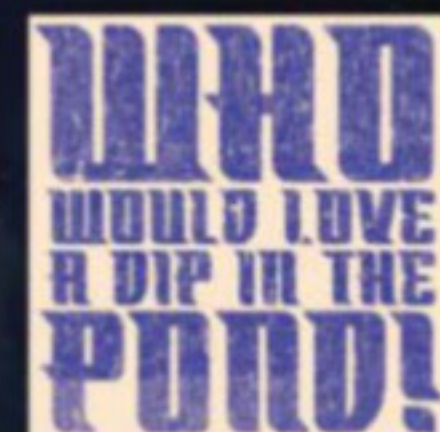
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